

August 2024



Save  
the  
Date!

### **GVG Pig Fair**

We will be holding our annual pig fair at [Taunton RFC](#) on [Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024](#).

We are looking forward to another great event, with a host of interesting talks and of course some pasties to finish off with!



### **African swine fever**

The dreaded African swine fever – something we have all heard much about in the recent months. ASF so far has spread across Europe, Asia and Africa with devastating consequences. Whilst we are still thought to be ‘free’ from this virus, protected by our natural barrier – the sea, it still poses a very real risk to our pig population both economically and for the health and welfare of our animals.

#### **So, what is it?**

ASF is a **highly contagious** virus which can infect domestic pigs, wild boar, warthogs and Ornithodoros (soft) ticks. Whilst the virus causes severe disease in pigs, with up to 100% mortality, it is not zoonotic and therefore poses no risk to human health. The main route of transmission is oro-nasal via direct or indirect contact with infected pigs. However, it is now thought that human-mediated spread is also a major risk factor, as seen in Europe where there have been infected animals found almost 800km away from the nearest infected domestic herd. These human-mediated factors include the virus being transported on contaminated fomites (clothing, vehicles or equipment) and the importation of infected meat/ meat products.

#### **How to recognise it:**

Clinical signs are normally seen within 5-15 days of initial exposure.

Main clinical signs:

- **Fever**
- **Loss of appetite**
- **Lethargy**
- **Sudden death**

Other signs can include:

- Vomiting and/ or diarrhoea
- Flushed red skin – particularly on the ears, snout, tail, legs and underside
- Ocular and nasal discharge
- Abortions
- Generalised weakness/ unsteady gait

(DEFRA published photos of clinical signs [African swine fever: clinical signs | Flickr](#))

## How can we prevent this getting into our pigs?

**Biosecurity** is paramount when thinking about the prevention of ASF spread: Here are a few protocols which should be followed:

- Providing and wearing clean PPE for anyone entering the premises
- Appropriate cleaning and disinfection of all vehicles and equipment that enter pig areas
- Correct disposal of all waste food products to prevent wildlife access
- Ensure no domestic food or catering waste is fed to pigs

There are currently **no** vaccines available to **control** or prevent ASF in our pig populations, therefore **prevention** is our most important form of control over this disease.

African swine fever is a **notifiable disease** and therefore must be **reported immediately** if suspected, by calling the Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301

[African swine fever: how to spot and report the disease - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

[African swine fever | AHDB](#)

## PHS upcoming dates

A quick reminder to all GVG Pig Health Scheme members if you would like your pigs assessed these are our next dates at Westerleigh:

- 12<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> August
- 4<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> September

If you have not yet joined the scheme and would like to, and market your pigs to Westerleigh please email [PHS@georgevetgroup.co.uk](mailto:PHS@georgevetgroup.co.uk) or call the office on 01666823355.

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