Swine flu a concern at The Great Frederick Fair

Posted by Suzzi On 09/24/2017

Press Release- Department of Agriculture

ANNAPOLIS, MD (September 24, 2017) – The Maryland Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Health and the Frederick County Health Department are investigating 11 cases of influenza in pigs recently exhibited at The Great Frederick Fair. Preliminary tests show that the pigs are infected with influenza A, but it is not yet known if this strain is potentially transmissible to humans. Additional testing and investigation is underway by the Department of Agriculture.

All swine at the Frederick County fairgrounds are under a quarantine order from the Department of Agriculture and will not be released until seven days after the last pig shows signs of influenza illness. To report sick pigs, or if you have questions about pigs and influenza, please call the Department of Agriculture at 410-841-5810 or after hours at 410-841-5971.

It is rare for influenza viruses that normally infect pigs – often called “swine flu” – to spread to people, but it is possible. Most commonly, human infections with swine flu occur in people who have been exposed to infected pigs (e.g., children handling pigs at agricultural fairs or workers in the swine industry). Limited human-to-human spread of swine flu has been detected previously, but no sustained or community spread has been identified.

The symptoms of swine flu in humans are similar to non-swine influenza and can include fever, cough and sore throat. Prescription influenza antiviral drugs can treat swine flu infections in people, especially when started early. Health officials recommend that people with influenza-like illness contact their healthcare provider and inform them if they have had pig contact within the past seven days. Providers are advised to contact their local health departments if they suspect swine flu in their patients to coordinate appropriate testing with their local health department. The Frederick County Health Department can be reached at 301-600-1029.

In accordance with the Secretary of Agriculture’s Hold Order (September 19, 2017), all swine exhibitions and any other activities involving swine will remain closed at the St. Mary’s and Calvert county fairs. All other movement or activities involving swine, including slaughter and butchering can proceed as usual.

Influenza viruses do not affect the safety of properly cooked pork. As with any raw meat, pork should always be properly handled and cooked to eliminate a range of food safety concerns.

Copyright © 2019 thebaynet.com. All rights reserved.