

Hog owners required to report deadly swine viruses

DOVER – Delaware hog owners, veterinarians and laboratories are now required to report suspected cases of two rapidly spreading swine diseases to the Delaware Department of Agriculture. Delaware has had no cases of either disease reported to date.

Under a new federal order, suspected cases of porcine epidemic diarrhea virus, or PEDv, and porcine deltacoronavirus, or PDCoV, must now be officially reported. PEDv has killed seven million piglets in the last year throughout the United States, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. PEDv was first reported in the United States last year, and has also been reported in Canada and Mexico.

Delaware has only a handful of commercial hog farms, but also about 55 smaller hobby farms with swine, such as back-yard hogs raised for shows.

“Despite Delaware’s small hog population, this virus remains a significant concern because it can be easily spread from farm to farm on contaminated clothing, shoes, equipment, trucks, or from infected swine,” said Delaware State Veterinarian Dr. Heather Hirst. “We are keeping a close eye on this situation to protect our hog owners and make sure they are aware of what to look for. The best defense for hog owners is to employ strict biosecurity measures to help prevent the viruses from getting to their farms.”

Examples of good biosecurity measures include:

- >> Purchase pigs from a reliable source.
- >> Keep newly purchased pigs separate from the rest of your herd for at least 30 days before mingling them with your established herd.

- >> Avoid carrying manure on clothing, boots, equipment, or vehicles from one farm to the other.
- >> Prevent visitors from other hog farms from entering animal areas at your farm.
- >> Avoid visiting farms where hogs are kept. If you must visit other hog farms, take special care to avoid carrying any trace of manure home with you to your herd.

Clinical signs of PEDv include severe diarrhea and vomiting, with the greatest losses occurring in pre-weaned piglets. Reports of suspected PEDv cases – any pig with severe diarrhea, vomiting, or both – should be made to the hog owner’s veterinarian as well as the Delaware Department of Agriculture’s Poultry and Animal Health Section at 302-698-4500. Hog operations with positive test results will be required to develop management plans with their veterinarian in order to prevent the spread of the disease to other farms.

More information is available at de.gov/pedv.

#

Contact:
Dan Shortridge
Chief of Community Relations
Delaware Department of Agriculture
302-698-4520