



**Agriculture, Food  
and Rural Initiatives**

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**Notice to Swine Producers and Veterinarians  
Regarding Swine Influenza in Manitoba**

Over the weekend, you will have heard news reports that there is an outbreak of Swine Influenza in humans. The outbreak was first discovered in Mexico, and new human cases have now been found in several US States and Canadian Provinces. To date, we have not had any cases identified in Manitoba.

Type A influenza viruses can infect a number of types of animals and people. The most common animal species that become infected are poultry, swine, sometimes horses and dogs. Each strain of virus seems to prefer to infect one type of host, but occasionally the virus will jump into a new species. Influenza viruses are known for their ability to mutate rapidly, and it is this trait that makes them extremely unpredictable.

This outbreak is caused by a new strain of H1N1 virus, not previously seen in North America. It is not clear what, if any, protection will be offered by vaccines currently in use. Biosecurity and surveillance measures should be stepped up in all swine and poultry herds during this time. To minimize the opportunity for influenza to pass from people to pigs, or from pigs to people, anyone suffering from flu-like illness should avoid contact with swine. Individuals who currently have symptoms of a severe respiratory illness (fever, new or increasing cough or shortness of breath) should contact their health-care provider. Any history relating to travel or contact with swine should be provided to the health-care provider.

Influenza A in animals is a provincially reportable disease in Manitoba. Any cases of respiratory disease in pigs should be investigated by a veterinarian. Appropriate samples should be sent to the MAFRI Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, 545 University Crescent, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5S6 (Tel. 204-945-8220) and notification should be sent by email to: [chiefveterinaryoffice@gov.mb.ca](mailto:chiefveterinaryoffice@gov.mb.ca) or by fax to: 204-945-4327.

Sincerely,

Wayne Lees  
Chief Veterinary Officer