



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES
COMMISSIONER ADAM H. PUTNAM

September 19, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: Florida Federation of Fairs & Livestock Shows
County Livestock Extension Agents
4-H Livestock Coordinators
Florida Future Farmers of America Association
Accredited Veterinarians
Florida Farm Bureau

FROM: Thomas J. Holt, D.V.M.
State Veterinarian/Director
Division of Animal Industry

Handwritten signature of Thomas J. Holt in black ink.

RE: The 2012 H3N2 Virus

I appreciate the opportunity to provide continuing education regarding the 2012 Influenza that is currently circulating in the U.S. A number of human infections with a variant Influenza-A H3N2 virus ("H3N2v") have been detected in the U.S. since July 2012. These are viruses that do not usually infect people but that occur in pigs and are very different from human seasonal viruses. This Influenza virus is thought to spread from infected pigs to humans in the same way that seasonal Influenza viruses spread between people. To date, the symptoms and severity of the H3N2v illness has been similar to seasonal flu. Fortunately, we have not had any cases of H3N2 in swine populations in Florida, but we recognize the need for information on this virus and the need for heightened biosecurity when dealing with animals.

Fair program participants should be reminded to take precautions protecting both human and animal health. The key is to avoid close contact between sick swine and people to prevent the spread of the virus. Should swine show signs of respiratory disease, they should immediately be isolated from other swine to reduce transmission. Swine with signs of respiratory disease should be reported to the farm veterinarian and to our Division for evaluation.

Enclosed is some background information on actions that can be taken to protect people from becoming infected with this virus, as well as a fact sheet indicating the current situation as of today. Any person with a suspected illness due to contact with pigs should consult with his/her health care provider and be sure to mention recent swine contact. In addition, the local county health department should be notified. Also included are some examples of signs that can be provided to fairs and exhibitors regarding biosecurity and swine exhibitions.

Please distribute the enclosed information to all interested parties. While swine are not a risk to humans at this time, we want to protect both swine and people from the spread of this disease in Florida. Again, if swine show signs of respiratory illness, isolate them, and limit contact with the other swine and people.

Should you have any questions, please contact our office at (850) 410-0900 or the Florida Department of Health at (850) 245-4401.

TJH/ph

cc: Dr. William C. Jeter, FDACS
Dr. Carina Blackmore, DOH