



Drafted by the OFFLU SIV group. Last updated: 19 April 2013

Avian Influenza A(H7N9) infections in pigs: frequently asked questions

1. Have there been any detections of the avian influenza A(H7N9) virus in pigs?

No. Testing of pigs by the Chinese authorities in the provinces where human infections have been detected and surrounding provinces has so far been negative. Further testing is ongoing.

2. Have other H7 influenza viruses been detected in pigs previously?

Avian to swine H7 virus transmission has only rarely been detected in the past, with no evidence for onward transmission within pigs or from pigs to other host species including humans.

3. Does this virus have potential for sustained transmission in pigs?

While these viruses have caused a number of sporadic infections in humans, we cannot conclude that H7N9 is able to exhibit infectivity and sustained transmission in pigs.

4. Have pigs been experimentally infected with the avian influenza A(H7N9) virus?

Research is planned and data from these activities are expected in the near future.

5. Is there any evidence that pigs have been involved in the genesis of the avian influenza A(H7N9) virus?

There is no direct evidence for the precise genesis of the virus.

6. What sampling and testing is recommended for detection of avian influenza A(H7N9) virus infection in pigs?

To detect any potential infection of pigs with the avian influenza A(H7N9) virus, active surveillance will likely be required. Virologic and molecular testing of respiratory samples from representative healthy and diseased animals is recommended. A list of recommended PCR primer/probe combinations can be found on the OFFLU website (www.offlu.net) under guidance section. In addition, serologic testing for evidence of prior exposure could be conducted concurrently with virologic and molecular testing. Hemagglutinin inhibition or microneutralization assays with the specific avian influenza A(H7N9) virus should be used. Interpretation of serologic data should be carefully assessed. Diagnostic assays should be reviewed as new surveillance and research data become available.

7. What actions should swine producers, owners, and workers take?

Standard measures for prevention of infection with influenza viruses of any subtype should be applied. Additional measures to avoid contact with potentially infected birds, humans, or fomites should be observed.