Hong Kong to cull 6,000 pigs as first swine fever case found

May 11 2019

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Hong Kong will cull 6,000 pigs after African swine fever was detected in

an animal at a slaughterhouse close to the border with China, the first case of the disease in the densely populated financial hub.

"In order to minimise the risk of ASF virus spreading from the slaughterhouse, all pigs in Sheung Shui Slaughterhouse will be culled so that thorough cleansing and also disinfection could be conducted," Sophia Chan, Secretary of the city's Food and Health Department, said late Friday.

She added that the pig detected with African swine fever was imported from a farm in the southern mainland Chinese province of Guangdong.

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After African swine fever spread across more than half of China's provinces last year, Hong Kong imposed import bans from any Chinese farms where the virus were detected.

With some of the world's most densely populated streets, Hong Kong remains on high alert to diseases. In 2003, some 300 people died during an outbreak of severe acute respiratory disease (SARS).

Chinese officials have said hundreds of thousands of pigs were culled in a bid to stop its spread—an effort that has also seen restrictions placed on moving pigs from affected areas.

The virus is not dangerous to humans but is fatal to pigs and wild boar.

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Citation: Hong Kong to cull 6,000 pigs as first swine fever case found (2019, May 11) retrieved 3

May 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2019-05-hong-kong-cull-pigs-swine.html

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