

East Timor says swine fever outbreak kills hundreds of hogs

October 3 2019



The tiny half-island nation of East Timor has said some 400 pigs died over the past two weeks

East Timor on Thursday confirmed that hundreds of hogs have died in an outbreak of African swine fever, after the disease has killed pigs

from China to Slovakia, pushing up pork prices worldwide.

The tiny half-island nation between Indonesia and Australia said some 400 pigs had died over the past two weeks.

East Timor's agriculture ministry said it has teamed up with its Australian counterpart to investigate the spread of the disease.

"Since September 19, the ministry has gathered information about the death of 400" pigs, it said in a statement Thursday.

The virus is not harmful to humans but causes [haemorrhagic fever](#) in pigs that is almost always fatal.

There is no antidote or vaccine and the only known way to prevent the disease from spreading is a mass cull of affected livestock.

Last month, South Korea reported its first cases of African swine fever, while China's swine herd is down by about 40 percent, and the shortage has pushed prices of the country's meat staple up by at least half.

A Rabobank report warned China could lose 200 million pigs during the epidemic.

Earlier this year, the UN's Food and Agricultural Organization said almost five million [pigs](#) in Asia had died or been culled because of the spread of the disease.

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