

CPPA has received numerous emails and phone calls about “Swine Flu”. I feel I should send something out to help put your mind at ease, or at least a little at ease.

As of 1pm ET on April 27, 2009 there are 64 confirmed cases (listed on the CDC web site) of the so called “Swine Flu”. <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/> You will notice I put quotes around the name “Swine Flu”. The reason for this is the CDC has identified this virus as “Swine Influenza A H1N1 virus”. It is a never before seen combination of a swine, avian and human virus’. None of the ill, at this time, have been known to have any contact with swine. Which means it is a human to human transmitted virus. However, since this H1N1 virus can be found in swine and in 1918 a vet noted that humans were getting sick and then their pigs and then back to humans, it was dubbed the “Swine Flu”. Where elsewhere in the world it was called the “Spanish Flu”. In reality it is a virus that has pandemic potential, but doesn’t necessarily have to do with swine **at this time.**

What IS “Swine Flu”? http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/swineflu_you.htm This link will provide you with a lot about this virus. But to sum it up: “The “Swine Flu” is contagious and is spreading from human to human. They do not know how easily the virus spreads between people. They believe it is spread just like any other flu, from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. Infected people may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 7 or more days after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick. Pigs most commonly get infected with flu viruses from other pigs, but also can get infected with flu viruses from birds and from people. This cross-species spread of flu viruses can lead to new types of flu viruses which is what appears to have happened here”. On the left side of this link <http://www.cdc.gov/s> towards the lower left side is a download of a flyer called “**Brochure: Swine Influenza in Pigs and People**”. I recommend you download it. Yes your pigs can get the “Swine Flu” from you, but... only if YOU or someone else who visits your home have it or if the pig has come into direct contact with an infected pig. Personally I would guess this is unlikely, especially if you are diligent about not letting anyone sick visit your house and/or you take some bio-security measures and don’t allow other pigs to visit your pig.

Here is a link to an article by Dr. John Carr on bio-security from the NAPPA web site. It’s good to read and to always be safe when it comes to our animals. <http://www.portec.com.au/thepig/petpig/biosecuritypet/biosecuritypetpig.htm>

Here is a podcast about “Swine Flu” <http://www2a.cdc.gov/podcasts/player.asp?f=11226>

If you are not sure if you have the flu, here is another link: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms.htm> The symptoms are pretty much the same for pigs as they are for people. See the above brochure: “**Brochure: Swine Influenza in Pigs and People**” on the CDC web site.

With all of this said, I recommend to stop this outbreak and any panic from the general public lets all just “stop, drop and think”. Watch the podcast above, listen to what he says. Wash your hands a lot. If someone is sick, do not allow them into your house. For the time being, do not take your pig out. I would recommend you keep them home until the dust settles. They recommend to not go to work if you are sick. I put alcohol based hand cleaner in my front yard (recommended alcohol hand sanitizer with 70% or higher isopropyl content or you can use disinfectants; for example: Lysol spray / Lysol Disinfecting Wipes 4 in 1) so when I get home, I can wash my hands with that even before I enter my house. Use common sense and you should be ok.

So lets circle the wagons, stop the panic and use common sense. Since there is no approved vaccine for humans or animals, at this time, lets just be safe and take necessary precautions to keep people from panicking. No one even knows if pigs can or will get this illness. This is all so fluid and know one knows what will happen or where this will end up. So play it safe and lets see this “Swine Flew” away... far, far away.

