

ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE NEWS

April 2019

The Animal Health and Welfare Officers from Argyll and Bute Council work across the area inspecting farms and dealing with complaints and queries in relation to animal health and welfare.

Our service focuses on inspecting those farms which we have identified as high risk and as many medium risk farms as possible. This means that many livestock owners will not be visited by the Council's Animal Health Officers.

In the course of our routine work, we have identified a number of issues which may be common across the farming industry in Argyll and Bute. We want to make sure that the wider agricultural community is aware of the issues which we have identified. The information in this newsletter is provided so that you can take steps within your own business to address any issues which might have arisen.

We hope you find this information useful. If you require any further information you can visit www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/animal-health-and-welfare, email animalhealth@argyll-bute.gov.uk or telephone 01546 605519.

AFRICAN SWINE FLU (ASF)

Following a significant increase in the number of cases of ASF, a disease of pigs, in Eastern Europe, and recent western spread to Belgium, the risk of an introduction of this disease to the UK has increased and is causing concern. ASF has been spreading in Eastern Europe since it first entered the European Union (EU) in 2014 from countries further east. In addition to the new cases in Belgium, the disease is already present in a number of EU Member States.

Although the disease does not affect humans and there is no food safety risk associated with meat, ASF is a highly contagious and usually fatal viral disease of pigs. An outbreak of ASF would also have a devastating impact on the UK pork industry affecting pig health and welfare and the ability of UK to trade pigs and pork products. If disease also got into

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feral pig populations it could also have an impact on their health and welfare, and Government would be obliged to put in place restrictions on hunting for a minimum period of at least two years.

We want to take this opportunity to stress the need for everyone travelling to the continent for hunting and shooting or similarly organising these activities in the UK, to take several precautions to reduce the risk of ASF entering the UK. The virus could be introduced in several ways, the main one being native pigs or wild boar consuming imported infected meat or meat products. The virus can survive months to years in smoked, dried, cured and frozen meat and meat products from infected pork or wild boar. Infection could also enter on contaminated boots, clothes, vehicles or equipment.

In order to help reduce the risk of introducing this disease, please do not bring back pork or wild boar meat and meat products to the UK. If such items are brought back, it is vital that they are safely disposed of in sealed bins and are never left in open bins or discarded from vehicles. These items must also never be fed to pigs or wild boar - to do so is illegal, and risks causing their illness and death. Other things hunters can do are:

- Avoid hunting in ASF affected countries (some affected countries are banning hunting).
- Avoid contact with wildboar found dead or sick
- Avoid contact with UK domestic pigs or wild boar on your return.
- Do not bring meat or meat products back to the UK, especially pork or pork products.
- Never feed pigs or wild boar with any meat or meat products - THIS IS ILLEGAL.
- Please do not bring dogs on hunting trips, as ASF infection can survive in their fur.

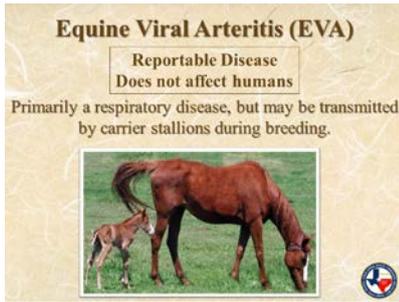
Further biosecurity advice and the latest news on ASF can be found on the **Defra**, **DAERA-NI**, **Scottish** and **Welsh Government** websites.

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EQUINE VIRAL ARTERITIS (EVA)



Restrictions on breeding have been put in place on the animals to limit the risk of the disease spreading and a veterinary investigation is underway to determine the source and possible spread of the infection. Owners of mares and stallions are urged to have their animals tested before they are used for breeding.

You can help prevent this disease spreading by following the [Horserace Betting Levy Board's \(HBLB\) Codes of Practice](#)

for the prevention, diagnosis, investigation, control and resolution of EVA. The Code includes specific advice for sport horse stallions and those using artificial insemination and embryo transfer including the recommendation of vaccinating stallions against the disease (talk to your vet for advice). Owners of mares and stallions are urged to have their animals tested before they are used for breeding.

If you suspect equine viral arteritis please get in touch with the Animal and Plant Health Agency. If you wish to have your horse tested on a precautionary basis contact your private vet and have your animal tested at an accredited laboratory. For further information on EVA please also see <https://www.gov.scot/publications/equine-viral-arteritis/> for general information and guidance on [practising good biosecurity](#).

How to spot equine viral arteritis

Signs of equine viral arteritis can include:

- abortions (failed pregnancies in mares)
- conjunctivitis (bloody tissue around the eye known as 'pink eye')
- swelling of testicles or udder, also around eyes and lower legs
- fever and runny nose
- depression
- lethargy and stiff movement

Many infected horses will show no clinical signs. In rare cases the disease can cause severe clinical signs or death in young foals.

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BLUE TONGUE VIRUS

Bluetongue is a notifiable insect-borne viral disease that affects all ruminants, such as cattle, goats, deer and particularly sheep. It cannot be spread directly between animals and relies on the midge for transmission. The disease does not affect humans and there are no public health or food safety implications. A vaccine is authorised and available for use in the UK.

Symptoms of Blue Tongue

In sheep, the symptoms of bluetongue include:

- fever.
- reddening of the lining of the mouth and nose.
- swelling of the lips, tongue and gums.
- difficulty swallowing and breathing.
- a swollen, purple-coloured tongue (hence, the name bluetongue)
- lameness.



Do you keep pigs?

Register as pig keeper

You can't keep a pet pig at your home until you [get a county parish holding \(CPH\) number](#) from the Rural Payments Agency (RPA).

You must also tell the [Animal and Plant Health Agency \(APHA\)](#) that you're keeping pigs, within 30 days of your first pet pig arriving on your land.

APHA will give you a herd mark. Herd marks are 1 or 2 letters followed by 4 digits, such as A1234 or XY9876.

You'll need this to identify your pig or micropig if you move it from your holding.

Further details can be found [here](#)

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