

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Animal Health Canada receives over \$1.5 million to continue work to prepare for foreign animal disease outbreaks

ELORA, ON – Thanks to over \$1.5 million of federal government funding, Animal Health Canada (AHC) will continue its collaborative work to enhance national preparedness for foreign animal disease outbreaks, especially for African swine fever (ASF) and foot and mouth disease (FMD).

AHC has been leading coordinated actions to prevent and control ASF in Canada since 2019 through working groups comprised of federal, provincial, and territorial governments and pig industry representatives. This model of collaboration will be extended into how to mitigate and handle a foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) outbreak in Canada.

"Animal diseases are an ongoing threat to Canada's livestock producers and prevention and preparedness initiatives from all orders of government and industry are vitally important," stated the Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. "Animal Health Canada's coordination role with partners and stakeholders has been key to Canada's animal disease prevention, and to ensuring our livestock sector is ready in the event of an outbreak. "

The \$999,990 from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's African Swine Fever Industry Preparedness Program will support the continued ASF preparedness planning, such as the prevention and control of African swine fever through wild pigs, indigenous engagement, and communication plans.

The \$697,950 from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's Federal Assistance Program will support the production of a framework for an integrated emergency response plan for FMD, guidance and resources for FMD vaccine, and the testing of emergency response plans for both African swine fever and foot-and-mouth disease through exercises and drills.

"We know that emergency preparedness never stops," says Erica Charlton, AHC's Emergency Management Division Director. "Thanks to contributions from our federal government partners, we will continue leading these collaborative networks to support the prevention and control of a foreign animal diseases outbreak."

African Swine Fever is a virus that severely infects pigs only. It is not harmful to humans, other animals, or the food system. ASF has no vaccine. Foot-and-mouth disease is a severe and highly contagious viral disease that causes illness in cows, pigs, sheep, goats, deer, and other animals with divided hooves. If either are found in Canada, it poses a significant risk to the health of Canadian swine and cattle, the pork and beef industry and the Canadian economy.

Funding support from both federal programs is until March 2025.

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Animal Health Canada is the only national organization that brings together industry, federal, provincial, and territorial partners to provide collaborative guidance on a cohesive, functional, and responsive farmed animal health and welfare system in Canada. For more information, visit <https://animalhealthcanada.ca>.

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