

Taiwan becomes swine fever and disease-free country

02 January 2023 | News

Taiwan would become one of the few nations free of the three major diseases that affect pigs



Taiwan would become one of the few nations free of the three major diseases that affect pigs

Taiwan has become a swine fever and disease-free country, without the need for vaccination, according to the Council of Agriculture (COA) of Taiwan. Taiwan took only six years to alleviate swine disease Huang Chin-cheng, Deputy Minister CAO said.

After keeping African swine fever at bay in 2018, the World Organisation for Animal Health declared Taiwan proper, Penghu and Matsu free of foot-and-mouth disease and in 2020 allowed pork exports from those areas.

According to the local media, nations such as Japan still ban imports of pork products from areas with classical swine fever, including Taiwan.

The council announced that from next year, domestic pigs and piglets would not have to receive vaccinations for classical swine fever.

From July 1, breeding pigs would also not have to receive that vaccination, it added.

Ending classical swine fever vaccinations can lift pig farmers's confidence and save up to NT\$700 million (\$22.8 million) a year in vaccination and labour costs, Huang said.

The council plans to apply to the world animal health body in June 2024 for Taiwan to be recognised as free from classical swine fever when vaccinations have not been used for a year.

The application is to undergo a review process, which takes about two months, Tu Wen-jane, Director-General, of the Bureau of Animal and Plant Health Inspection and Quarantine said.

If the application is successful, Taiwan would be declared a swine fever-free area at the organisation's conference in 2025 and would be the first Asian nation to be approved, she said.

Taiwan would become one of the few nations free of the three major diseases that affect pigs – foot-and-mouth disease, classical swine fever and African swine fever – which would boost the competitiveness of the nation's pork products, Chen Chi-Chung said.

The achievement is a result of pig farmers' cooperation, the COA's policies and leadership, and the implementation of a plan by the bureau and the institute, Chen said.

Stepping up quarantine measures at customs and checking mail and packages to guard against African swine fever were crucial to preventing it from entering Taiwan, and also reducing the risk of foot-and-mouth disease and classical swine fever, he said.

The COA would continue to help meat processing plants obtain hazard analysis and critical control points certification, set up a slaughterhouse-to-butcher cold chain in the pork industry and upgrade facilities on pig farms, he added.

The government would continue to strictly control foreign pork products entering Taiwan and improve the treatment of kitchen waste before feeding it to pigs, Huang said.