

DEALING WITH AFRICAN SWINE FEVER

A rural area of the Eastern Cape has experienced the most recent outbreak of the highly lethal African Swine Fever. It will be extremely difficult to pinpoint when the disease began because the deaths in pigs are not diagnosed regularly. Farming practices in the affected area include allowing pigs to roam freely or semi-confinement. Keeping pigs is an important way of life and a vital income stream for rural communities of the EC and the health and welfare of their animals is important to them. The South African Pig Producers' Organisation (SAPPO) was impressed with, and is supporting the endeavours of EC Veterinary Services in ascertaining the extent of the outbreak. The level of knowledge and training of local livestock farmers by both State Veterinarians and Animal Health Technicians was more than satisfying. SAPPO has been able to assist with the provision of material to improve awareness in the communities in their fight to reduce the spread of ASF. These include short pictographic videos that highlight important aspects of preventing ASF from getting into an owner's pigs. The welfare of the owners and their animals has thus been promoted.

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