

18 November 2022

CHIEF VETERINARY OFFICER BULLETIN

Japanese encephalitis 2022- 2023 season: first detection for the season

NSW Department of Primary Industries has confirmed the first case of Japanese encephalitis in pigs for the 2022-2023 season.

Testing of still born piglets at Elizabeth Macarthur Agriculture Institute this week has confirmed infection with Japanese encephalitis virus.

The piglets were from a property in the Murray Local Land Services region, a region affected in the outbreak earlier this year.

Japanese encephalitis virus is a mosquito-borne viral disease, which is maintained in nature by transmission cycles involving *Culex* sp. mosquitoes, certain species of wild and domestic birds. Pigs are a known amplifying host of the JE virus.

Japanese encephalitis is associated with reproductive failure in pigs, including still births, abortion, mummified piglets. Boars may be infertile (temporarily or permanently). Piglets up to 6-months of age may show neurological signs.

Horses may become infected, but they do not spread the virus to other animals or people as they are a dead-end host. Most infected horses do not develop clinical signs. Those that do, show neurological signs (e.g., incoordination, impaired vision) that range from mild to severe and may be fatal.

People may also become infected resulting in encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) and death in severe cases. People become infected with Japanese encephalitis by being bitten by an infected mosquito.

Japanese encephalitis is a notifiable disease in NSW. If you suspect Japanese encephalitis in your animals contact the **Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888** (24-hours a day) or **your local district veterinarian on 1300 295 299**.

Additional Information regarding JE and animals

- NSW Department of Primary Industries Japanese encephalitis webpage – available at [Japanese encephalitis \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/japanese-encephalitis)
- Farm Biosecurity webpage: Controlling mosquito around piggeries – available at [Controlling mosquitoes around piggeries - Farm Biosecurity](#)
- Farm Biosecurity webpage: Mosquito management for horses – available at [Mosquito Management for Horses - Farm Biosecurity](#)
- NSW Health webpage: Mosquito-borne disease surveillance – available at [Mosquito-borne disease surveillance - Mosquito borne diseases \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

Additional information regarding protecting people from JE infection

- Please go to NSW Health webpages: [Japanese encephalitis virus \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/japanese-encephalitis-virus)