



JABATAN PERKHIDMATAN VETERINAR MALAYSIA

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JABATAN PERKHIDMATAN VETERINAR MALAYSIA

Pig farmers fret over ASF with some planning to quit industry

MEDIA	RUANGAN	MUKA SURAT
The star	Nation	8

Pig farmers fret over ASF with some planning to quit industry

By BENJAMIN LEE
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PETALING JAYA: Pig farmers and butchers say that they are worried that the African swine fever (ASF) has reached "pandemic proportions", with some already thinking of quitting the industry.

As certain states with big farms such as Perak do not have well-equipped slaughterhouses, live pigs are usually sent to Selangor to be slaughtered to enable fresh pork to reach customers in the shortest time.

As at Jan 31, the Veterinary Services Department (DVS) has placed an interstate ban on transport of live pigs from Perak and Penang to Selangor.

This has caused a surplus of live pigs in these two states, and lack of pork in other states where the demand is high, especially Selangor.

Perak Animal Husbandry Association president David Lee Chli Yuan said that as most pork retailers and consumers are from Selangor, some Perak farms tried butchering their pigs at the only slaughterhouse in Ipoh before transporting the processed parts to Selangor.

There is no ban on the movement of processed pork parts.

"However, due to the slaughterhouse not having a cold storage and most farmers also not having any refrigerated trucks, the meat turned bad quickly and, as a result, could not be transported to Selangor," he said.

He added that Perak farms are currently forced to send most of their excess overgrown pigs to slaughterhouses in Kuantan.

A veteran pig farmer from Melaka, known as Chua, said he culled 2,000 pigs following the outbreak of ASF in the state early last year.

He is now not sure whether to continue rearing pigs as it is too costly and risky, although subsidies received from DVS covered the losses to some extent.

"I've already been selling at a loss during the movement control order from 2020 to 2021. ASF then hit my farm and caused the loss of my entire business.

"I lost over a million ringgit and while we were promised subsidies from the DVS, nothing was announced or given to us for almost a year.

"I am now not sure if I will continue operating pig farms anymore as not only are the costs high but the risks of a random disease popping out and killing my animals are too high," he said.

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Govt looking into how to help pig farmers, ensure adequate supply

By ZAKIAH KOYA
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PETALING JAYA: The Cabinet will look into how to assist the commercial pig farming industry, which is being devastated by the African swine fever (ASF), says Datuk Seri Mohamad Sabu.

The Agriculture and Food Security Minister said the ministers also discussed the various types of assistance that could be given in

view of the need to curb ASF and ensure the adequacy of pork supply in the market.

"The Cabinet discussed this at length on Feb 8 as the farmers and the pork industry chain, including consumers, are affected.

"There is a shortage of the vaccines for the pigs as the vaccine from Vietnam was found to be not internationally approved.

"We are now trying to source it from elsewhere," added Mohamad.

On the global scene, a proven vaccine for ASF has yet to materialise.

"The interstate ban stays for now to ensure that the ASF does not spread to pig farms that have not been infected.

"We understand that there is a shortage of pork in certain states, and to supplement this, we will import pork from countries not affected by the ASF to ensure adequate supply," said Mohamad.

At a special meeting at the ministry yesterday, the ministry was informed that as of last year alone, more than half a million pigs were transported from Perak farms to Selangor slaughterhouses.

"We are still in a meeting discussing the best way we can help the pig farmers with surplus pigs," said a source who attended the meeting, adding that a statement will be issued by the ministry soon.

On Jan 15, Bernama reported that

91 pig farms in Perak have been infected with ASF.

Some 8,488 pigs had to be culled at a loss of RM12mil.

On Jan 28, Penang confirmed that 23 pig farms in the state have been affected, with thousands of pigs already culled to curb the spread of the virus which, according to the Veterinary Services Department, does not affect humans.

ASF's mortality rate is usually 100%.