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Dear California Swine Producer:

Classical swine fever (CSF), also known as hog cholera, would have devastating effects on the swine industry if it were to become established in swine herds in the United States. The National Pork Producer Council has recognized this disease as a major threat to the US swine industry. You can help the USDA and CDFA protect California's swine industry and also assure our trading partners that US swine producers are vigilantly looking for evidence of this disease through participating in a national effort to survey high-risk pigs in the coming year. Highest risk populations are pigs that are fed garbage containing uncooked table scraps. Regardless if the pigs are used for commercial production, project swine, or even pet potbelly pigs, meat scraps and visitors from other countries can unintentionally provide exposure to this virus. Wild pigs are also at risk, particularly those that forage in and around municipal and private dumps sites, or composting areas. However, pigs with other common diseases can also look like CSF.

Education: Educational materials like the enclosed USDA Fact sheet are available to swine producers and veterinarians. We encourage you to use these materials when working with FFA, 4H and other groups. A Spanish language Fact sheet is also enclosed to provide training to farm workers and others. All associated groups need to be made aware of the need for bio-security to protect pigs from exposure to uncooked foreign meats, and even the clothing of people who have been in foreign countries where they may have had contact with swine.

Free diagnostic testing: In order to target specific types of disease problems that might look like CSF, the USDA has developed the following list of signs to watch for: **generalized hemorrhages, persistent high fevers (pigs will often huddle together), high mortality, ongoing but undiagnosed disease problem, red/purple skin or ears, nervous signs (swaying, falling, weakness, convulsions), abortions, stillbirths and mummies, congenital defects, large lymph nodes.** These symptoms are common to other swine disease conditions therefore we would like to assist with the clinical diagnostics in order to also provide a higher level of surveillance for the exotic diseases such as CSF.

The California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory (CAHFSL) will be collecting and submitting tissues to USDA laboratories for CSF testing from routine swine submissions that exhibit one or more of the signs in the list above. Swine that have lesions seen at necropsy that could possibly be CSF will also be submitted. If you have pigs with one or more of the signs, the USDA/CDFA program will provide free CAHFSL diagnostic workups of dead pigs so that we can also collect samples to send for CSF testing. Since some types of CSF could be so mild the pigs only exhibit abortions, mummies and stillbirths and since fetuses are not very useful samples for virus testing, the program will pay the cost of sow abortion serology at CAHFSL in order to assist in making a diagnosis and also send the samples for CSF serology. The laboratory does not provide consultation or advice on the treatment or prevention of diseases in swine, so owners are asked to work with their herd veterinarian or through the CDFA district office to determine if pigs meet the above criteria for free testing. Reports on these qualified cases will be sent to the owner and the veterinarian of record.

Sincerely,

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