

# Isabela's Best Practices and Protocols in minimizing the risk of ASF crisis

03 September 2020

## What is African Swine Fever?

African Swine Fever (ASF) is a highly contagious viral disease impacting only domestic and wild pigs, not humans, that has no cure and no vaccine. It is characterized by high fever, loss of appetite, reddening of the skin and hemorrhages of the internal organs, and death which follows between 2-10 days on the average. Mortality rates can be as high as 100%. The first ASF outbreak in the Philippines started in July 2019. The Department of Agriculture then banned the importation of pork from various countries due to the cases of African Swine Fever and contaminated meat from different Asian, European, and African countries.

According to the World Organization for Animal Health, ASF can be transmitted through direct contact with infected pigs, ingestion of contaminated materials such as food waste, feed or garbage, or contaminated fomites (premises, vehicles, implements, clothes) or biologic vectors (soft ticks).

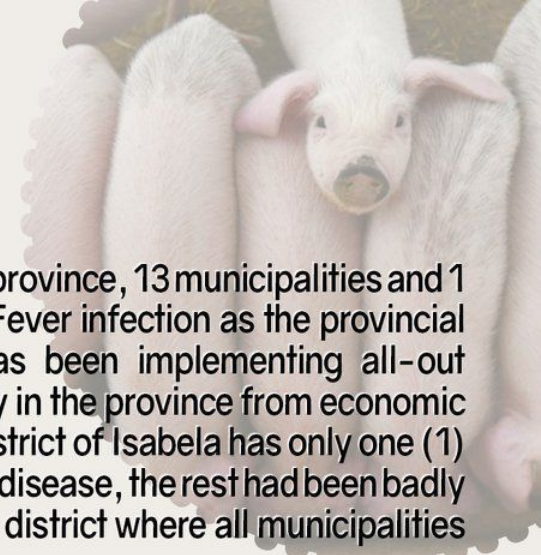
While ASF is not known to harm humans, the viral disease caused major economic loss to the province's swine industry particularly the backyard hog raisers, which are among the worst hit in the ASF-affected areas.

## Initial outbreak of ASF in the Province

The initial outbreak of ASF in Isabela occurred in the last week of February this year when ASF-infected swine were detected in Quirino, Isabela through blood testing of the pigs with the assistance of Provincial Veterinary Office (PVET), Department of Agriculture (DA RO2) and the LGU's Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO). It escalated to the neighboring towns of Quezon, Mallig, and Roxas and lingered for three (3) months. The initial outbreak ended last May 10, 2020 as recorded by the PVET. During this period, 16 municipalities were infected with 41 barangays affecting 2,923 pigs which were eventually culled owned by 366 affected hog raisers.

Status of Culling	No. of Municipalities Affected	Total Barangay	Pigs Culled	Farmers Affected
Culling from February 2020 to May 2020	16	41	2,923	366
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>41 brgys</b>	<b>2,923</b>	<b>366</b>

Table 1. Summary of Pigs culled due to the initial outbreak of ASF in the province (February 2019 to May 2020)



## ASF recurrence in the province

On July 25, 2020 the recurrence of the disease was confirmed in the town Quezon, where 210 pigs were immediately culled to prevent spread and contain the ASF scare. As of this writing, 11 municipalities are already identified with ASF infection covering 76 brgys. During the recurrence of the ASF from the period July to September, a total of 6,155 pigs were already culled as of September 1, 2020 owned by 921 hog raisers.

	<i>Municipality</i>	<i>No. of Barangays</i>	<i>No. of Pigs Culled</i>	<i>No. of Farmers Affected</i>
1	Quezon	11	1,280	183
2	Roxas	9	446	86
3	Aurora	12	709	86
4	Luna	15	1,341	187
5	Mallig	7	518	73
6	Ramon	2	4	2
7	Echague	6	638	103
8	San Mateo	5	555	114
9	Burgos	1	186	29
10	Cabatuan	1	330	28
11	San Manuel	7	146	30
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>76 brgys.</b>	<b>6,155</b>	<b>921</b>

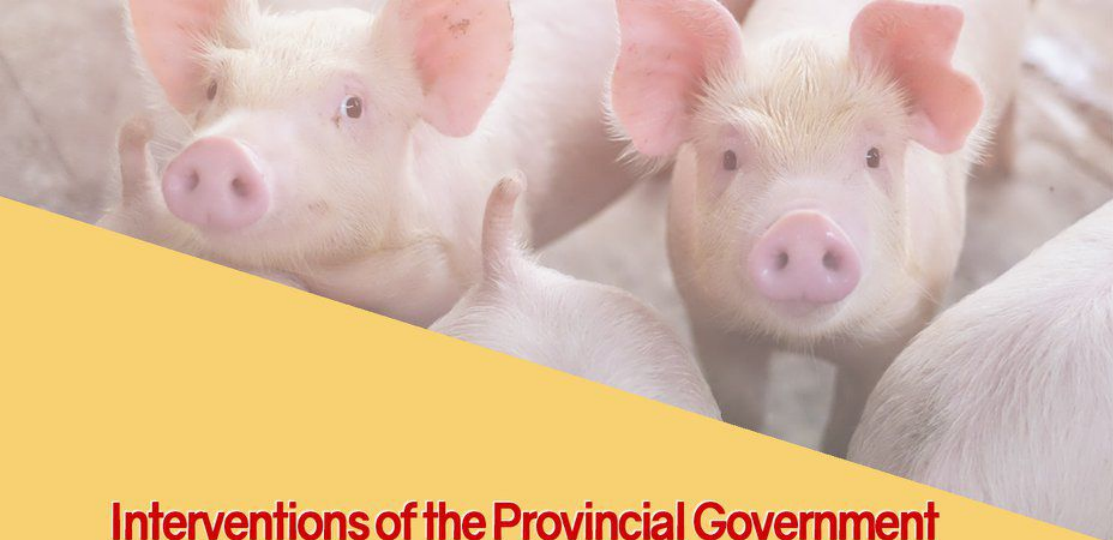
Table 2. Summary of Pigs culled during the recurrence of ASF in the province (July 25, 2020 to September 1, 2020)

With the recurrence of the ASF in the province, 13 municipalities and 1 city remains free from African Swine Fever infection as the provincial government remains vigilant and has been implementing all-out efforts to safeguard the swine industry in the province from economic loss. Data shows that while the first district of Isabela has only one (1) municipality with reported cases of the disease, the rest had been badly hit especially the third, fifth, and sixth district where all municipalities were affected (Table 3).

<i>District</i>	<i>City/Municipality</i>	<i>No. of City/Municipality</i>
District 1	Ilagan City Cabagan* Delfin Albano* Divilacan Maconacon Tumauini Sta. Maria Sto. Tomas	8
District 2	Benito Soliven Palanan Naguilian* San Mariano	4
District 4	Dinapigue San Agustin	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>14</b>

Table 3. Summary of ASF-free Cities/Municipalities

\* Blood testing has been conducted/under observation



## Interventions of the Provincial Government - Gov. Rodito

True to its commitment in supporting Isabeleño farmers, the provincial government had financial assistance to hog raisers whose livestock were affected by the ASF during the first outbreak. Governor Rodito Albano III personally led the distribution of the financial aid to extend support to the affected hog raisers in the province in the entire month of June 2020. The provincial government provided the affected owners cash assistance of P2,500 per head of culled pig. A total of P5,665,000 as of June 2020 was distributed to various hog owners whose pigs were culled (Table 4).

Status of Culling	No. of Municipalities Affected	Total Barangay	Pigs Culled	Farmers Affected	Financial Assistance
Culling from February 2019 to May 2020	16	41	2,923	366	5,665,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>41 brgys</b>	<b>2,923</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>P 5,665,000</b>

Table 4. Summary of Financial Assistance given by PGI to affected hog raisers

On August 26, 2019, Governor Rodito Albano III signed Executive Order No. 25-A, creating a task force that will be responsible in monitoring the entry of livestock animals and meat products in the province as a manifestation of his desire to prevent the entry of ASF in the province. The Task Force immediately put-up checkpoints in the southern and northern boundaries of Nueva Vizcaya- Isabela in Cordon and Cagayan- Isabela in San Pablo.

Following the reported increasing incidents of hog mortality in Luzon and neighboring provinces, the Governor ordered a total ban on the entry of swine and all fresh, frozen, and processed pork products in the province through Executive Order No. 46 of 2019. As pork supplies started to drop in the province, Governor Albano issued Executive Order No. 58 of 2019 directing all Local Government Units and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) provincial office to intensify price monitoring of commodities affected by the ASF crisis.

Earlier this year, an executive order was issued by OIC-Governor Faustino G. Dy III, enforcing the "no katay" or no backyard butchering/slaughtering of swine and "no paura" or order pork now, pay later schemes in the province. Uraga is an Ilocano term for loaning meat to barangay-mates in exchange of bags of rice or corn come harvest season which is one of the causes why ASF spreads in the province as reported by the Provincial Veterinary Office.

The province was placed under a state of calamity on March 10, 2020 due to growing cases of African Swine Fever and the threat of coronavirus disease (COVID-19). By declaring a state of calamity in Isabela, LGUs and the provincial government can use the calamity fund to implement measures to mitigate the impact of the ASF and safeguard public health, safety and security against COVID 19. The calamity fund will also provide assistance to hog raisers affected by African Swine Fever since the spread has discouraged some Isabeleños to purchase swine and pork products which immensely affected the livelihood of hog growers as well as those whose daily income relies on the meat-selling market.

# Executive Orders Issued by Governor Rodito to fight ASF.

	Executive Order/Resolution	Title	Date Issued/Effectivity
1	Executive Order No. 25-A series of 2019	Creating a Task Force that will be responsible in monitoring the entry of livestock animals and meat products in Isabela, for the prevention and control of "African Swine Fever" and other diseases affecting the livestock industry	August 26, 2019
2	Executive Order No. 46 series of 2019	Declaring a total ban on the entry of swine and all fresh, frozen, and processed pork products in the Province Of Isabela, and directing all Local Chief Executives to implement measures in support of the ban, and the Isabela Provincial Police Office (IPPO) and the Provincial Task Force to establish checkpoints in all ingresses and egresses in the province	October 1, 2019
3	Executive Order No. 58 series of 2019	Directing all Local Government Units and the Department Of Trade And Industry (DTI) Provincial Office to intensify price monitoring of commodities affected by the African Swine Fever (ASF) crisis and issue a ban on swill, or hogwash/kitchen refuse feeding, to prevent the spread of ASF, and directing the Isabela Provincial Police Office (IPPO) to support the Department Of Agriculture in the lockdown of	November 29, 2019
4	Executive Order No. 07 series of 2020	Directing All Local Government Units To Intensify The Monitoring Of Entry And Regulating The Movement, Distribution And Sale Of Swine, Pork And Processed Meat Products Within The Province Through Mandatory Establishment Of Anti-Asf Checkpoint Between Municipal And City Boundaries And Known Ingresses And Egresses Of The Province	February 6, 2020
5	Executive Order No. 09 series of 2020	Directing all Local Chief Executives through their punong barangays to enforce the policies of "No Katay" or No backyard butchering/slaughtering of swine and "No Pauraga" or Order Pork Now - Pay Later Scheme in their barangay as preventive measures to counter the spread of African Swine Fever in the province	February 11, 2020
6	Executive Order No. 29 series of 2020	Directing the strict implementation of Executive Order No. 07-2020 "Directing All Local Government Units to intensify the monitoring of entry and regulating the movement, distribution and sale of swine, pork and processed meat products within the province through mandatory establishment of anti-ASF checkpoint between municipal and city boundaries and known ingresses and egresses in the province; and Executive Order No. 09 "Directing all Local Chief Executives through their punong barangays to enforce the policies of "No Katay" or No backyard butchering/slaughtering of swine and "No Pauraga" or Order Pork Now Pay Later Scheme in their barangay as preventive measures to counter the spread of African Swine Fever in the province" due to resurgence of ASF cases at an alarming number in the province	August 14, 2020
7	Resolution No. 2020-09-4 series of 2020	A resolution declaring the Province of Isabela under State of Calamity due to the spread of African Swine Fever and 2019 Coronavirus Disease	March 10, 2020

Table 5. Summary of Issuances of the Provincial Government of Isabela in relation to ASF

## Best Practices/Protocols of PGI

Since the Department of Agriculture (DA) Region 02 confirmed the recurrence of African Swine Fever (ASF) in the region, a total of 8,930 pigs were culled in the province to control the spread of ASF. Nineteen (19) municipalities recorded ASF cases with 99 barangays infested while 1,257 hog raisers were affected.

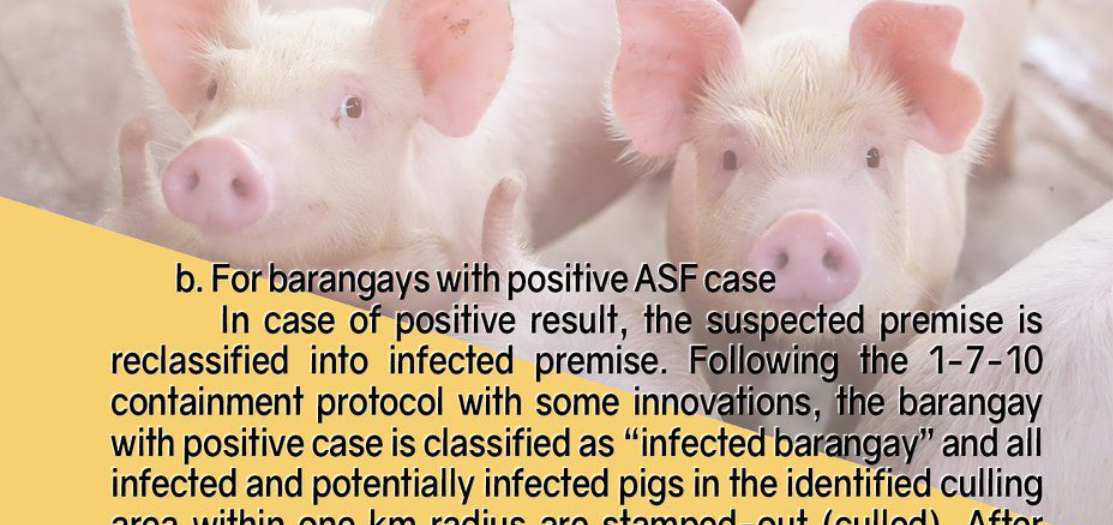
### Surveillance for early detection

Early detection is the key in the control of any disease outbreak. To operationalize this, barangay officials are tapped to monitor unusual pig mortalities and to report immediately any incidence to the Municipal Agriculturist/City Veterinarians who report the same to the Provincial Veterinary Office for confirmatory diagnosis through the laboratory of the Department of Agriculture.

### Implementation of containment program

#### a. For barangays with suspected case

Piggery with suspected case of ASF (suspected premise) were being quarantined. No pig, pork, processed pork products are allowed to get out of the piggery to prevent cross contamination. Sick animal in the suspected premise are not allowed to be slaughtered, and in case of death, suspected animal are buried properly. While waiting for the result of the samples submitted to the laboratory, the barangay is quarantined and barangay checkpoints were established.



**b. For barangays with positive ASF case**

In case of positive result, the suspected premise is reclassified into infected premise. Following the 1-7-10 containment protocol with some innovations, the barangay with positive case is classified as “infected barangay” and all infected and potentially infected pigs in the identified culling area within one km radius are stamped-out (culled). After culling, the infected premises are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected daily for 30 days to get rid of the virus which is very resistant in the environment outside the host. To prevent the disease from spreading to other barangays, strict quarantine is undertaken.

**c. For barangays without suspected or positive case of ASF**

Barangays surrounding the infected barangay (Control Zone) and other barangays (Surveillance Zone) within the municipality have been established checkpoints to regulate the flow of pig, pork, and processed pork products from infected barangays and municipalities to avoid being infected.

**Establishment of checkpoints in other municipalities**

To avoid being infected with ASF, all LCEs in the province were ordered by the governor to establish checkpoints in the ingresses and egresses of their city/municipality in order to regulate the flow of pig, pork, and pork by-products especially those coming from infected municipalities and provinces from entering their municipality. Police officers were also tapped to assist in this activity.

**Information, Education, and Campaign (IEC)**

Information Campaign in all levels is being conducted to educate the public especially the raisers on the nature of the disease, control measures and biosecurity.

Aside from the “control protocol,” quarantine checkpoints in all ingresses and egresses in the province and municipalities has been established manned by personnel from the Philippine National Police (PNP), Public Safety Office (PSO), Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPA), and Provincial Veterinary Office. Disinfection of transport vehicles entering the province and confiscation of pork meats and pork products without proper certification from the National Meat Inspection Service and the Veterinary Inspection Certification is implemented. Part of the action plan by the Isabela ASF Task Force is active surveillance and reporting by Municipal Livestock Technician and barangay official, disease investigation and zero survey (blood examination) for early detection and massive information campaign to educate hog raisers on how to prevent ASF infection in their communities.

Although ASF poses no risks to humans, the economic losses that it caused are staggering especially to backyard hog raisers in the province who are solely dependent on raising hogs as their source of livelihood. In the absence of vaccines, the only available option for the eradication of ASF is the practice of responsible hog raising. Seminars are continuously conducted by PVET for LGUs.

Provincial Veterinarian Dr. Angelo Naui said that the provincial government is strictly enforcing checkpoints province wide and is implementing total lockdown on certain barangays to ensure that the ASF disease will not spread in other areas of the province with no cases. He also recommends to implement the strict compliance of hog raisers to practice biosecurity in all aspects. “Hog raisers must avoid feeding swill to their pigs, stop visiting other farms and stop others to visit their farm. Disinfection and maintaining cleanliness in their livestock farm is also important,” he added.