



OFFLU Swine influenza virus (SIV) group statement

Mission statement

The OFFLU Swine Influenza Virus (SIV) group is a network of experts on swine influenza who are actively engaged in research and surveillance activities to understand the disease and contribute to improving its control and prevention. The SIV group represents both animal health and public health sectors with a goal to have global representation. By sharing and analyzing surveillance data the group will generate a global picture of influenza viruses circulating in swine, shared with the international community through regular bulletins and scientific publications and made available on the OFFLU website. The ultimate goal of the group is to reduce the burden of swine influenza on animal and human health through promotion of detection and intervention programs on a global scale.

Objectives

- Expand awareness of the importance of swine influenza as a disease of health and economic significance.
- Increase understanding of the burden of swine influenza in swine production.
- Promote the collection and dissemination of epidemiologic, virologic and antigenic information to support effective disease detection, prevention and control programs.
- Share epidemiologic and laboratory data and scientific expertise with other animal and human health stakeholders.
- Advocate for increased participation in surveillance among swine producers and veterinarians for the long term advancement of effective swine influenza detection, prevention and control programs.
- Advocate for increased support from public and private sectors for surveillance in swine.
- Provide technical expertise to support evidence-based and balanced communications pertaining to all stakeholders.

Approach

These objectives will be accomplished (as feasible with limited financial and human resources) through the following activities:

- Interfacing with stakeholders such as governments, professional societies and commodity groups to advocate the SIVG mission.
- Presentations at domestic and international meetings.

- Holding periodic expert meetings to share global surveillance data on the genetic and antigenic characteristics of recently circulating viruses, identify data gaps, and find ways to fill them.
- Publishing scientific and lay materials describing the global influenza situation in swine.
- Providing expert consultation to support global policy and communications on animal and public health issues relating to influenza viruses in swine.
- Providing guidance on best practices for swine influenza diagnosis, surveillance and control.
- Developing and updating the OFFLU SIV global research agenda.
- Maintaining a regularly updated list of the available viruses as these viruses evolve into new genetic and antigenic variants that could be used for development of vaccines and diagnostics in different regions of the world.

Guiding principles

- The outputs of the group should be beneficial to both animal health and/or public health, ultimately providing a better understanding of influenza in swine, and improving diagnostics and control measures.
- SIVG activities should be conducted in a manner that fosters trust and demonstrates the practical benefits of swine influenza surveillance to producers.
- The OFFLU SIVG was established under the umbrella of the OIE-FAO network of expertise on animal influenza (OFFLU) and its collaboration with the WHO. It is led by scientific experts and is governed within the framework of the OFFLU network www.offlu.net