

Veterinary Services Dept steps up checks on pork imports for African Swine Fever virus

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The ASF virus is highly resistant and can remain active in frozen products for up to 1,000 days while the smoked and canned meat have the resistant of up to 30 days. — Reuters pic

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 31 — The Department of Veterinary Services (DVS), along with several other agencies, will intensify monitoring on the import of pork and pork-based products into the country in an effort to curb the risk of spreading the African Swine Fever (ASF) virus.

Veterinary Services director-general Datuk Dr Quaza Nizamuddin Hassan Nizam said the operations were aimed at importers, distributors and restaurants believed to have obtained the animal-based supplies and products from the list of banned countries.

“The operations will be carried out regularly to identify any parties involved who are believed to have obtained pork-based supplies and products from 10 prohibited countries as announced by the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry (MoA) on October 28.

“Through the operation, further investigation and action will be taken against any illegal import of pork meat, suckling pigs, and other pork-based products,” he told a press conference on the latest status of the ASF virus here today.

The ASF virus is highly resistant and can remain active in frozen products for up to 1,000 days while the smoked and canned meat have the resistant of up to 30 days.

The operations will be conducted in collaboration with the Royal Malaysian Customs Department, the Malaysian Quarantine and Inspection Services Department (MAQIS), the Food Safety and Quality Division of the Health Ministry and the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry (KPDNHEP).

On October 28, Sarawak was reported to have imposed a ban on all pork meat and pork-based products imported from ASF-infected countries including China until further notice.

The move was following the discovery of the DNA of ASF virus in one of 17 canned pork luncheon meat imported from China in Sarawak on October 25, and further confirmed during a laboratory test conducted by DVS Veterinary Public Health in Salak Tinggi.

The MoA also announced the ASF outbreak had been confirmed in 10 Asian countries, namely, China, Mongolia, Vietnam, Cambodia, North Korea, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines, South Korea and Timor Leste. — Bernama

