

Swine fever claims 340 pigs in Mpigi

Endemic. The disease is reportedly spreading across the country with officials warning people against eating pork.

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MPIGI. Pig farmers in Mpigi District are counting their losses following an outbreak of African swine fever that has claimed a number of animals in the area. The African swine fever is a contagious viral infection that spreads rapidly in pig populations.

It is passed onto pigs in a vicious

cycle between soft ticks and wild pigs and direct contact with infected pigs.

Dr Reuben Kawagga, the district veterinary officer, confirmed the outbreak yesterday, saying at least 347 pigs have been confirmed dead in eight villages.

The affected villages include Kafumu, Mpambire, Nabusanke, Buseese, Kkonkoma, Kiringente, Ssango and Mitala Maria.

"Many pigs in the district have so far died and the disease is still spreading," he said in an interview.

He added that quarantine on move-

ment of pigs and selling its products is yet to be enforced in the affected villages. "Our team of veterinary experts has been sent to all the affected villages to contain the outbreak. We are expecting good results from them and we urge farmers to cooperate by reporting to us any new cases," Dr Kawagga said.

He said the infection has persistently spread due farmers' reluctance to adhere to the set preventive precautions put in place.

He explained that due to the outbreak, many pork dealers dodge the authorities and flock the area and

cheaply buy the animals from farmers who are afraid of losing their animals to the disease.

Mr Alex Mpoza, the district youth

chairperson and one of the pig farmers in Nabusanke village, Nko county, said he had lost 25 pigs last couple of weeks.

ABOUT THE FEVER

Dr Kawagga explained that an infected pig shows signs of high fever, loss of appetite, and difficulty in breathing. Between two to three days, the animal completely loses strength to stand due to paralysis in the legs.

Control measures: Farmers have been advised to manage the disease through confining

their herds, restricting their movements, burying carcasses of the infected pigs, and carry out preliminary disinfection by spraying the premises.

Other affected areas: The disease has also been reported in Rubaga Division, Kampala and Masaka District where people have been cautioned against eating pork