

ADVICE FOR OWNERS OF PET PIGS AND 'MICRO' PIGS

General guidance for keeping your pig





Keeping pigs or 'micro' pigs – animals specially bred to be smaller in adulthood than most other pig species - as pets or as a hobby can be extremely rewarding. However, while owners may regard their pig as a much loved pet, they remain farmed animals in the eyes of the law and subject to the same disease controls and regulations as pigs kept in commercial livestock herds.

These regulations have been put in place because all pigs are susceptible to a number of highly contagious viruses - such as swine fever and foot and mouth - which could have a devastating effect on the UK's agricultural industry if allowed to spread unchecked. These viruses are

known as 'notifiable' diseases because of the legal requirement for pig owners to notify the authorities if their animals are suspected of carrying them.

To prevent hobby keepers and owners of pet pigs or 'micro' pigs from unwittingly helping to spread notifiable diseases, Animal Health has developed a comprehensive guide explaining the rules and requirements involved in pig ownership.

The following guidance covers a wide variety of aspects, including requirements for moving, registering and identifying pigs, and outlines what owners need to do to keep their animals fit, healthy and legally compliant.

MOVING PET PIGS TO THEIR NEW HOME

Before moving pigs from their place of purchase to new accommodation, you will need a County Parish Holding (CPH) number.

The CPH number is a nine-digit code which identifies the premises or area of land where your animals will eventually be kept – important information in the event of a notifiable disease outbreak.

To apply for a CPH number you will need to contact the Rural Payments Agency. Further details of how to do this can be found [here](#).

When you have your CPH number, the person or company you are buying your pigs from (known as the 'departing address') is responsible for providing you with an animal movement document known as an AML2.

The departing address must complete sections A and C of this form, keeping the yellow copy for their records. The person responsible for transporting the pigs from

the departing address to your premises will need to complete section B with their details and retain the blue copy.

Once these sections of the document have been completed your pigs will be free to move – provided the transporter complies with the conditions of Defra's general licence for moving pigs (a copy of these conditions is available from Defra's website).

Once your pigs have arrived at your premises you will need to complete section D of the AML2 form with your details. Within three days of your pigs arriving you must send the white copy of the AML2 to your Local Authority, retaining the pink copy of the form for your records for at least six months.

To move a pig off your premises, you will need to contact your Local Authority for blank AML2 forms.

Pigs bought from a market will need an Individual Movement Licence, which will be issued at the market by a Local Authority officer. This licence will serve as the appropriate movement document.



ONCE THE PIGS ARE ON YOUR PREMISES

Once your pigs have arrived at their new home, your premises will be subject to 'standstill' rules. These rules mean that any pigs or other livestock animals already on your premises, will not be allowed to move off the address for a set period of time. Standstill rules help to guard against the rapid spread of notifiable diseases, by providing an incubation period during which diseases can be detected and identified.

Standstill rules apply different time restrictions on different species of livestock animal. For example, pigs arriving at your premises will trigger a 20 day standstill on other pigs already living there, whereas resident cattle, sheep and goats will only need a six day standstill. Similarly, cattle, sheep and goats moving onto your premises will impose a six day standstill on any pig you own.

For more information on livestock movements contact your local [Animal Health office](#), or Local Authority.

REGISTERING YOUR PIGS

Whether you have one pet pig or a thousand animals in a commercial herd, you will need to register them with Animal Health as soon as they arrive at their new home. In the event of an outbreak of a notifiable disease, registration is vital to effective disease control because it allows the authorities to precisely locate all livestock animals within a given area.

Pig keepers who fail to register their animals within one month of their arrival are not only breaking the law, they are also putting their animals and all other livestock kept in the vicinity at risk of infection.

To register your pet pig, you will need to phone your local Animal Health office and provide staff with your County Parish Holding (CPH) number.

Once you have informed Animal Health that you are keeping pigs, they will register the animals for you. This may be done over the phone or you may be required to put the information in writing.





FIG 1: GLOUCESTER OLD SPOT PIGS

(NOTE: If your correspondence address is different from the location where your pigs will be kept, you must inform Animal Health and confirm they have the correct details.)

When your pigs are registered, a herd mark will be automatically created. The herd mark is a unique code which provides a quick and effective means for inspectors to identify premises from which pigs have moved.

Once you have registered your animals, your local Animal Health office will send you a registration document.

RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

All pig owners, from those keeping pet pigs to commercial pig farmers, are required to keep records of the animals moving on or off their premises. This information, known as a holding movement record, can be kept in written or electronic form.

The holding movement record should be in the following format:

- The name and address of the person keeping the record;
- The date of movement;
- The Identification number or temporary mark;
- The number of pigs moved;
- The address of the holding from which they were moved;
- The address of the holding to which they were moved;

You are obliged to record each movement of a pig on or off your premises within 36 hours of the movement taking place, and once a year you will need to record the maximum number of pigs you normally keep.

These records must be available for inspection by your Local Authority, which can visit your premises to review your records or ask for them to be sent for inspection. Even after you stop keeping pigs, holding records must be kept for a period of six years after the date that the last animal left your premises.



IDENTIFYING YOUR PET PIG

The herd mark that will be given to you by Animal Health when you first register your pigs, will need to be applied to your animals before they are allowed to move off your premises. This can be done in a number of ways - by an ear tag, a herd mark (also known as a 'tattoo') or a temporary mark (also known as a 'slap mark') - depending on the age of the pigs and their intended destination.

Ear tag

- An ear tag must be stamped or printed, not hand written;
- It must comprise of the letters 'UK' followed by your herd mark. For example: UK AB1234;
- Tags used for animals destined for slaughter can be metal or plastic, however, they must be able to withstand carcass processing;
- Tags used for movements between holdings can be plastic.

Tattoo

- A permanent ink mark comprising your herd mark (without the UK prefix) applied to the front of each of the pig's shoulders;

- Legible for the life of the pig and throughout the processing of its carcass.

Temporary Mark

- Paint mark on the pig. For example, a red line, black cross or blue circle;
- The mark must last until the pig reaches its destination;
- Combined with the movement document, the temporary mark identifies the holding from which the pig has been moved.

Pigs under 12 months old need temporary marks to move between premises, and an ear tag or herd mark if they are moving to market or slaughter. Pigs over 12 months old can move between premises, to any type of market, and to slaughter only, with your herd mark or ear tag.

All of the equipment required for making ear tags, tattoos and temporary marks can be purchased from agricultural suppliers.



PET PIG WALKING LICENCES

Taking your pet pig for a walk is a good way to keep the animal fit and healthy. However, because the activity has the potential to spread notifiable diseases, pig owners in England and Wales are legally obliged to obtain a pig walking licence from their local Animal Health office before taking their animal out. Pig owners in Scotland are not allowed to walk their pigs.

To apply for a licence you will need to submit a proposed walking route for assessment by one of our Veterinary Officers. If they believe your route risks spreading disease - for example, due to the proximity of a livestock market, high health status pig farm or fast food outlets - your application will be rejected and you will be asked to provide an amended or alternative route.

If your application is approved, you will be issued with a licence that will need to be renewed annually.



ADVICE ON FEEDING YOUR PET PIG

Contaminated waste food can spread viruses and bacteria to livestock, and pigs can quickly infect other animals when infected with a disease like foot and mouth.

The first case of the 2001 foot and mouth disease outbreak was found at a farm where unprocessed waste food was being fed to pigs. The subsequent review of the outbreak led to legislation banning the feeding of catering waste to any farmed animal, pig or poultry. This is now reflected in EU-wide legislation.

As a pig owner you need to know that it is illegal to feed your animal with waste food and scraps from your own kitchen or dinner table. It is also illegal to feed pigs with waste food from restaurants, kitchens, and other catering facilities - even if those establishments cater solely for vegetarians. In addition, current legislation imposes strict controls banning the feeding of other materials of animal origin, or products containing them, to farmed animals.

There are a small number of exceptions to this, and the following materials may be fed to pigs:

- Liquid milk or colostrum (a type of milk used to rear very young animals) may be fed to pigs, provided the food originated from the same holding as that on which the pigs are kept;
- Former foodstuffs (other than catering waste food from kitchens, catering facilities etc) containing rennet, melted fat, milk or eggs, but where these materials are not the main ingredient;
- Restricted proteins such as fishmeal, (animal derived) di-calcium or tri-calcium phosphate, or blood products if suitably processed;
- Milk, milk products and white water sourced from registered premises, or as former foodstuffs from retail outlets. These products must not enter the kitchen or they become catering waste;
- Egg and egg products, but only if treated in accordance with Animal By-Products (ABP) regulations. This would



FIG 2: FEEDING HUMAN FOODSTUFFS TO PIGS IS POTENTIALLY ILLEGAL AND MAY CAUSE DISEASE

mean sourcing from an ABP processing plant or a food factory. It does not allow for pigs to be fed with raw egg or egg products from chickens on the pig owner's premises, eggs or egg products from domestic kitchens, or eggs or egg products from retail stores or supermarkets.

Anyone in England and Wales obtaining waste milk, milk products or white water to feed to their pigs would need to be registered with Animal Health for this purpose - although in the case of milk products, this would only be necessary if the food contained more than 80% milk. Details of how to register, and more information on the feeding of milk and milk products, are available from your local Animal Health office and the Defra website.

It is permissible to source certain types of former foodstuffs, as well as fruit and vegetables, from non-catering premises for feeding to pigs. However, this must only be from premises that either do not handle materials banned from being fed to pigs, or that have procedures in place to ensure complete separation from prohibited materials (these

procedures must have been agreed with the Local Authority).

If you are uncertain about what can and cannot be fed to your pigs please contact your local Animal Health office for further advice.



FURTHER INFORMATION:

If you would like more information on keeping pigs, you could visit:

- www.defra.gov.uk/animalhealth
- www.businesslink.gov.uk/farming
- www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/pigs/



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