

African swine fever hits another village

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THE Agriculture department as identified more areas where there has been an outbreak of African Swine Fever, it said yesterday.

The village of Tatalon in Quezon City has been added to the list after backyard pigs there were found to have contracted the virus, Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar said in a statement.

Quezon City Mayor Maria Josefina G. Belmonte told reporters the case in Tatalon may have been caused by meat products being brought to its market.

Also affected by the virus are areas in the provinces of Rizal, Bulacan, Pampanga, and Pangasinan. About 20,000 hogs have been culled, the agency said.

Ms. Belmonte said pigs from the village of Pasong Tamo have shown symptoms of the virus. She noted that since Saturday, 62 pigs have been culled there.

The local government has started killing the pigs even before laboratory results are released, she said.

The Agriculture department urged pig traders not to transport pigs from affected areas to prevent the spread of the virus.

“Trucking has to be strictly observed in terms of whether or not the pigs being transported are infected with the virus or not,” Mr. Dar said. “We have now asked the local government units to strengthen their checkpoints.” —