

## DA validating 'ASF pork' in QC

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THE Department of Agriculture (DA) on Monday said it will improve measures against African swine fever as it validates another reported discovery of ASF-tainted pork in another supermarket in Quezon City.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of his meeting with pork industry stakeholders, Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar said they have agreed to “strengthen” existing guidelines to further control and contain ASF in Luzon.

Dar said DA teams are currently validating another report that ASF-affected pork was being sold in a QC supermarket, the second under the DA’s radar after it confirmed recently the ASF-tainted pork in their shelves.

“We are one in seeing to it that the ASF is properly managed, controlled and contained,” he said.

“We will continue to strengthen existing guidelines to ensure that nothing gets past us. The validation is ongoing [on reported second supermarket case]. Only one has been confirmed [so far],” he added in a mix of English and Filipino.

Dar did not provide details on the possible changes in DA’s existing guidelines on ASF, saying that they are “too general to mention now.”

He pointed out, though, that everything would be “elevated.”

Dar disclosed that he will talk to Executive Secretary Salvador

Medialdea this week for the possible issuance of an executive order on the government’s National ASF Zoning plan.

He expects the document to be issued by Malacañang within the month.

In a separate interview with reporters, Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte said there has been a second supermarket whose pork samples “allegedly” tested positive for ASF virus. The samples were tested by the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI).

“There’s another supermarket whose samples we submitted to BAI allegedly tested positive for ASF. So given that, there’s more than one