

QC intensifies fight vs ASF infection

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The Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) disclosed on Thursday that at least 60 hogs were confiscated in Quezon City after their transporter presented fake permits at an **African swine fever (ASF)** inspection site.

Initial reports said that the hog transporter, who claimed to be from Sariaya, Quezon, presented fraudulent documents including a fake ASF clearance certificate, local government shipping permits and veterinary health certificates at the Tandang Sora checkpoint. It added that the traders also lacked a local shipping permit from the BAI. The hogs were being transported to a slaughterhouse in Caloocan City.

Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has warned unscrupulous traders, saying the agency “means business” and hoping the seizure would be the first and last.

“We cannot compromise public health, the viability of the local livestock industry, or the country’s food safety and security,” Laurel said.

The DA recently set up inspection sites in several areas of Luzon to prevent the spread of ASF following an outbreak in Batangas province.

Aside from Tandang Sora, checkpoints are also located in Commonwealth, Quezon City; EDSA Balintawak; Marulas and Malanday in Valenzuela City; STAR Tollway in Sto. Tomas, Batangas; and animal quarantine checkpoints in Turbina, Calamba, Laguna and Amuyong, Cavite.