

Plant Extract Shows Some Effects against ASF Virus

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SOUTH AFRICA - An initial project at the University of Pretoria has indicated some activity of a liana plant extract against the African Swine Fever (ASF) virus.

Research by Folorunso O. Fasina of the University of Pretoria confirms that a liana-like plant, *Ancistrocladus uncinatus*, has anti-viral potential against the ASF virus and farmers' claims seem to have certain degree of veracity. However, further work needs to be done to explore the potential of the plant while reducing its cytotoxic effect *in-vitro* and *in-vivo*.

In a paper published in *BMC Veterinary Research*, Fasina and co-authors in Pretoria and at the National Veterinary Research Institute, Maximum Farms and ARC-Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute explain that ASF is a highly contagious fatal acute haemorrhagic viral disease of pigs, for which there is currently no treatment or vaccination protocol and it threatens the pig industry worldwide.

Recent outbreaks were managed by farmers with ethnoveterinary preparations with various claims of effectiveness.

The researchers identified 35 compounds using GC-MS protocol and ASF virus (NIG 99) was significantly reduced by some extracts and fractions of the plant. However, the plant was poorly extracted by water and cytotoxicity was found to be a major problem with the use of the plant since its extracts also reduced the primary cells used in the assay.

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