

Zambian Pig Producers Warned against Illegal Pig Movement

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ZAMBIA - The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock department of veterinary services is reported to have destroyed animals with African Swine fever and the authorities are warning against moving pigs into restricted areas.

The Small Livestock Association of Zambia has urged pig farmers not to smuggle pigs from other parts of the country into Lusaka as this could be a threat to the industry which is currently under surveillance, reports the *Daily Mail* of Zambia.

The Association's chairman, Martin Mukuka, said the measures by Government to ban the movement and processing of pig products is aimed at saving the pig industry in the country. He appealed to pig farmers and stakeholders to abide by the government's decision on the ban, and hoped that the situation will normalise soon.

"I wish to warn all our members and farmers to refrain from breaking the law, as this ban is legal and has to be respected for the betterment of the small-scale livestock industry, contrary to the use of illegal means of smuggling the pigs into Lusaka. We, therefore, urge every stakeholder to cooperate so that the outbreak can be contained for the good of everyone," he said.

Mr Mukuka said this in a statement availed to the *Daily Mail* in Lusaka on 23 December. He said the association will ensure the rights and freedom of the small-scale livestock farmers are protected and that they are given full and right information through the association's outreach programmes that are currently being undertaken to sensitise farmers on the African swine fever.

Mr Mukuka said the ban is a welcome development and not a political gimmick as being insinuated by some farmers in selected parts of the country.

He alleged that some people with unknown political motive are going round informing pig farmers that the ban is political and is meant to punish those that did not vote for the Patriotic Front.

He urged livestock stakeholders to refrain from listening to such people wanting to divide the country by issuing alarming and dangerous statements for their selfish agendas.

"The measure which the government has undertaken is to protect the farmers' interest. If it was left unchecked, African swine fever would have spread to other parts of the provinces and eventually wipe out the pig population," he said.

Meanwhile, the overnment will consider lifting the ban on the movement of pigs and processing of pig products next month, after the decontamination procedure is undertaken.

Deputy Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Luxon Kazabu, told the *Daily Mail* on 23 December that the ban is still effective throughout the festive season as Government is following procedure to contain the outbreak.

Mr Kazabu said in an interview that so far, the Government had slaughtered about 12,160 pigs and that the number is likely to increase.

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