



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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The Department of Livestock Advises Montanans About Swine Imports

Helena, Mont. – The impacts to meat packing plants due to COVID-19 has resulted in the sale and movement of animals through non-traditional channels. The Department of Livestock (DOL) is asking Montanans to be aware of the requirements to move swine into the state and to sell pork products.

Packing plant closures throughout the country have resulted in a backup of swine going to feeding and slaughter. Many farmers, especially in Midwest states, are seeking new outlets for their animals. This has resulted in an influx of pigs coming to Montana for harvest and for sale to individual buyers for feeding.

DOL lists the following requirements:

- Live animals (swine and other livestock species) transported to Montana for immediate slaughter require a health certificate and an import permit number. To obtain an import permit, please call the Import Office at (406) 444-2976.
- Swine being transported to Montana for feeding require a health certificate, an import permit number, and need to be individually identified with an ear tag, tattoo, or ear notch.
- Meat products from swine harvested in Montana can only be sold if they were processed in a state or federally inspected plant.
- Only federally inspected meat products can be sold to customers out of state.
- Meat products processed by Custom Exempt businesses are labeled “Not for Sale” and may not be sold or donated; they may only be consumed by the owner of the animal, family members, employees, and non-paying guests.

“We are happy to see Montanans supporting swine producers in other states who have lost their market access. However, we have a responsibility to protect the health of our Montana swine

herd and our import requirements assure only healthy animals come to Montana,” said Dr. Tahnee Szymanski, Assistant State Veterinarian with the DOL.

All swine owners are encouraged to practice biosecurity and work with a veterinarian and county extension agent on questions concerning health and management of newly purchased pigs. The DOL would also like to remind Montanans that domestic pigs can revert to a feral state quickly if not housed and managed appropriately. A lot of work has been completed to prevent the introduction of feral swine into the state and now is the time to be especially diligent due to our growing swine population.

The mission of the Montana Department of Livestock is to control and eradicate animal diseases, prevent the transmission of animal diseases to humans, and to protect the livestock industry from theft and predatory animals. For more information on the Montana Department of Livestock, visit www.liv.mt.gov.

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