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Philippines eases pork supply constraints with reopening of Spanish imports

18 May 2026 | News

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The Philippines has lifted its temporary ban on pork and swine product imports from Spain following a comprehensive review of African Swine Fever (ASF) controls, marking a move expected to strengthen meat supply stability and ease pressure on domestic pork prices.

The Department of Agriculture (DA), through a newly issued circular, formally recognised Spainâ??s ASF regionalization system, allowing the resumption of imports of pork meat, pig skin, and other swine by-products from designated low-risk zones under strict sanitary and quarantine conditions.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. said the decision reflects a calibrated balance between protecting domestic livestock industries and ensuring food security through science-based trade protocols. â??We remain vigilant against ASF, but we also recognize the importance of science-based risk assessment and international cooperation in securing stable food supply chains,â?• he said, adding that regulated imports from monitored zones help diversify supply sources without compromising animal health safeguards.

The Philippines had imposed a temporary ban on Spanish pork imports last year following ASF detections in parts of Europe, triggering tighter biosecurity controls aimed at protecting the local hog industry. The latest directive, issued under Department Circular No. 22, formally recognises Spainâ??s regional containment approach and aligns with existing veterinary frameworks governing bilateral trade partners.

Under the new rules, all shipments from Spain must comply with established import protocols, Philippine quarantine requirements, and Administrative Circular No. 12 (series of 2025), which sets out guidelines for ASF regionalization agreements. The Bureau of Animal Industry confirmed that its assessment found Spainâ??s veterinary surveillance and disease-control systems sufficiently robust to minimise the risk of ASF transmission from approved export zones.

Officials from the Philippine and Spanish veterinary authorities have also finalised technical conditions governing the certification and monitoring of pork shipments originating from designated low-risk regions, reinforcing a zone-based approach rather than nationwide trade restrictions.

The DA said the policy shift reflects global best practices in animal disease management, where regionalization allows countries to contain outbreaks within specific geographic areas instead of imposing blanket import bans. Industry observers expect the decision to support market stability as the Philippines continues efforts to rebuild its domestic hog population, which has been significantly affected by ASF outbreaks in recent years.

Spain, one of the worldâ??s largest pork exporters and a long-standing supplier to the Philippine market, is expected to help diversify import sources and contribute to more stable retail pricing in the local meat sector.

The Department of Agriculture said the order takes effect immediately and will remain in force unless amended or revoked in writing, underscoring its intent to maintain a flexible, risk-responsive trade framework anchored in international animal health standards.