



## **WHO raises alert to phase 6**

**Ottawa, ON [June 11, 2009]** – The World Health Organization (WHO) today announced they have raised the level of influenza pandemic alert from phase 5 to phase 6. This particular H1N1 strain has not circulated previously in humans and the virus is entirely new.

“The Canadian Pork Council (CPC) wishes to remind everyone that the *H1N1* Influenza A virus, often referred to as ‘swine flu’, is not transmissible to people through eating properly handled and prepared pork or other products derived from pigs,” says Jurgen Preugschas, Chair of the national hog farmers’ organization. “The safety of the food supply is not affected and Canadian pork continues to be safe to eat.”

Some serious misunderstandings around the safety of pork exist due to the initial unfortunate naming of H1N1 Influenza A as swine flu. Influenza viruses do not affect the safety of pork or pork products.

Dr. Cate Dewey, Chair of Population Medicine at the University of Guelph provides a clear explanation of what health authorities have been telling consumers in relation to the spread of H1N1 Influenza A that you cannot get the flu by consuming pork or pork products. The YouTube video, entitled *Pork Safety Explained- Dr. Cate Dewey* can be viewed at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=92DEyRK2D\\_A](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=92DEyRK2D_A). or by searching “Dr. Cate Dewey” at [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). This view is shared by the Public Health Agency of Canada, the WHO and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Canadian Pork Council would also like to urge producers to take extra precautions to protect workers and animals and prevent the introduction of the new influenza virus strain into your operation. We are suggesting that you review and strengthen your existing biosecurity practices.

The Canadian Pork Council serves as the national voice for hog producers in Canada. A federation of nine provincial pork industry associations, our organization’s purpose is to play a leadership role in achieving and maintaining a dynamic and prosperous Canadian pork sector.

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