

Industry News - AM H1N1 still causing fear in Chinese pork consumers: study By [Tom Johnston](#) on 9/4/2009

Some two-thirds of China's consumers ceased eating pork in the initial stages of the H1N1 influenza outbreak earlier this year, and more than one in five consumers still believe they can contract the flu from eating pork, according to a survey of 1,200 Chinese consumers commissioned last month by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF).

Joel Haggard, senior vice president Asia-Pacific for USMEF, told more than 600 global pork industry executives Thursday at a meeting in China that the world's largest pork producer and consumer may have been more affected by the H1N1 virus outbreak than previously suspected.

"In the early stages of the outbreak, 64 percent of Chinese consumers refrained from pork consumption," said Haggard. He cited research conducted Aug. 6-10 by Sinotrace Marketing Research Company of 200 consumers in each of six Chinese cities: Beijing, Shanghai, Chongqing, Guangzhou, Nanjing and Shenyang.

Even several months after the initial outbreak, 21.2 percent of respondents said they still believe that eating pork can lead to catching the H1N1 flu. Although the Chinese government has been trying to educate consumers regarding the safety of pork, 54.7 percent of those who fear the connection between pork and H1N1 attribute their concern to the name "swine flu."