Updated Outbreak Assessment

Update #8 on African Swine Fever in East Europe

10th April 2017  Ref: VITT/1200 ASF in East Europe

Disease Report

The last three months have seen new reports of African Swine Fever (ASF) in several countries in East Europe. Moldova has reported an outbreak of on a small backyard farm (7 pigs) in Soroca region on the northern border of Moldova with the Ukraine. Six out of seven pigs had typical signs of ASF (anorexia, increased temperature and apathy) and all tested positive by PCR for the virus. This is the second time that ASF has been reported in Moldova, the previous 2 outbreaks were both on backyard farms.

Ukraine has reported multiple outbreaks in domestic pigs – backyard farms – in several regions. Russia has several outbreaks in domestic pigs, in farms of varying size, from backyard up to commercial holdings. The authorities also reported a single backyard outbreak in Irkutsk region which is on the Mongolian border, and represents a large jump in disease distribution. This is unlikely to be the result of spread in wild boar, but more
likely some illegal movement of live infected pigs or contaminated product. The report was resolved without further spread.

Latvia reported two outbreaks of ASF in domestic pigs on 13\textsuperscript{th} January and 17\textsuperscript{th} February on two commercial units. One was a breeder farm and the other was a fattening farm. Both farms were owned by the same company. Estonia, Lithuania and Poland have continued to report cases in wild boar.

**Situation Assessment**

ASF was first reported in Dondusei, Moldova in September 2016. These outbreaks were a result of fomite transfer following importation of infected pork products from the Ukraine. There has been a progressive westward spread of ASF over the last year in the Ukraine with a significant number of outbreaks having been reported in Odessa on the western border of Moldova. The Moldovan pig sector is predominately backyard with over 2/3 of the 600,000 farms being backyard premises.

The Ukraine and Moldova have limited links with the UK, with no imports of pork products or livestock so even if the disease were widespread it would not present a significant risk.

EU Member States bordering the Ukraine have in place wild boar surveillance areas along the borders, part funded by EU programmes for active and passive surveillance (for more information, please see presentations available at http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/health/regulatory_committee/presentations_en.htm).

In the EU Baltic States, ASF in wild boar continues to be reported but at lower numbers than this time last year. There has been no significant increase in the extent of the restriction zones, but some have changed in terms of risk level, and the appropriate annex in 2014/709/EU has also been changed to reflect this.

**Conclusion**

Despite these outbreaks, the risk of ASF introduction to the UK remains very low (that is, “rare but could occur”), as the disease itself is still relatively contained in the restriction zones, and there are EU rules in place to cover the safe trade in meat and other products of animal origin.

We would like to remind all pig keepers to be vigilant, maintain biosecurity including the swill feeding ban and report any clinical signs of suspect disease promptly to a veterinarian.

We will continue to report on the situation as regular updates or if significant changes in the epidemiology of the disease occur.
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References

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