

Updated Outbreak Assessment #15

African Swine fever in Eastern Europe

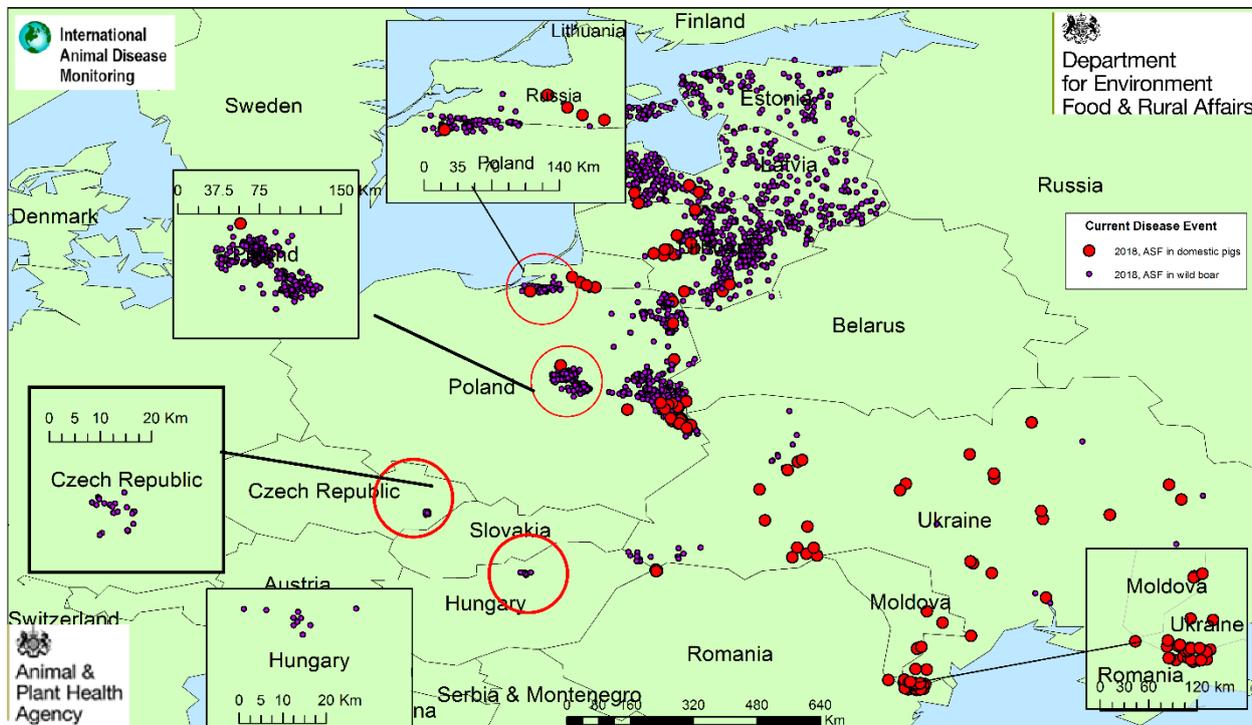
25th June 2018

Ref: VITT/1200 ASF in Eastern Europe

Disease Report

Since our last update on 25th April 2018, cases of African Swine Fever (ASF) have continued to be reported in wild boar and in domestic pigs and farmed wild boar in Eastern Europe and western Eurasia. While there have been no large westward jumps since the reports in wild boar in central Hungary in April this year or those in the Czech Republic in June last year, there has been a rise in cases in backyard pigs which is concerning. Romania has recently reported a new cluster of ASF outbreaks (all in backyard domestic pigs) in a new area on the south eastern border with Ukraine and Poland has reported cases in areas where wild boar are testing positive. In addition, Hungary has reported cases in wild boar just over the Ukraine border which represents another new area.

The cases in wild boar and domestic pigs in Eastern Europe since January are shown in the map below.



Actual Scale 1:11,000,000

Date prepared 26/06/2018

Map prepared by IDM

ASF in domestic pigs and wild boar since January 2018
[Insets: Czech Republic, Kaliningrad, Poland, Romania & Hungary]

Hungary: Further cases in wild boar have been detected in the Heves region (ten in total this year). Most of these are single dead animals, although a cluster of three boar was found in late April. A second cluster of 12 new cases in wild boar has been reported in a new region, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg. The first case in this region was identified within 1 km of the border with Ukraine. Taking into consideration the distance to the infected neighbouring regions in Ukraine and the spring migration of wild boars, natural spread is the most likely source of infection.

Poland: There have been no further westward jumps in the last two months, but wild boar cases are still regularly reported in regions bordering Kaliningrad in the north and in the regions around the city of Warsaw. There have been more than 1,450 cases in wild boar reported this year. There have also been 38 outbreaks in domestic pigs this year, of which 34 are in the last two months. Following epidemiological investigations, possible sources of infection have been identified as poor compliance with biosecurity rules (e.g. lack of fencing at infected holding) and suspicion of illegal pig movements (PAFF, 2018). There has been no recent trade in live pigs from Poland to the UK. Biosecurity awareness has been increased within the wider disease control zone and efforts are now concentrating on public awareness campaigns aimed at hunters and border controls.

Russian Federation: Six outbreaks in swine (one small commercial herd and rest backyards) reported in the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad north of Poland, and two new outbreaks have been reported in western Russia since late April.

Lithuania: There is regular reporting of cases in wild boar. Lithuania reported 14 outbreaks in pigs in June in backyard and commercial premises (the first for this year). Inspections and census of pigs in the protection and surveillance zones is being undertaken. In Lithuania all pig farms, including non-commercial are now inspected and tested and there is a big public information campaign (PAFF, 2018)

Latvia: There has been over 500 reported cases in wild boar to date, but in June a commercial pig premises with 165 pigs reported ASF infection. So far this month there have been three cases in total. Farms in the protection and surveillance zones are being inspected (PAFF, 2018).

Czech Republic: ASFV emerged for the first time in June 2017 in the Zlin region, and no cases in wild boar have been reported since mid-April following targeted surveillance which found 11 dead wild boar at 5/6 months old. All domestic pigs in the infected area have been depopulated. Passive surveillance is ongoing.

Romania: To date, over 110 outbreaks of ASF have been reported in Romania in backyard pigs in the last month. The latest cases are on the south eastern border with Ukraine in Tulcea county (113 of the 114 cases were reported from this region) and one in Satu Mare region on the northern border with Ukraine. This represents incursion into a new area, albeit close to Ukraine. These cases are mainly in backyard animals, none in commercial farms. Strict biosecurity measures are in place, and other measures to minimise contact with wild boar are in place, such as feeding wild boar is suspended. These cases are within 10 km of the Ukraine border.

Moldova: Three cases of ASF were reported in backyard pigs in Moldova in mid-May. Passive surveillance has not detected disease in wild boar.

Ukraine: Forty-two outbreaks have been reported in Ukraine this year, but mainly in domestic backyard pigs with fewer cases (30 cases) being reported in wild boar. The border of Ukraine is a potential source of ASF for neighbouring EU countries such as Hungary and Romania and also Moldova.

Situation Assessment

ASF is continuing in Eastern Europe, although no large jumps have occurred since the last report. Nevertheless, ASF has been reported in new regions in Hungary (Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county) and Romania (Tulcea), both on the borders with Ukraine. The spread could be due to wild boar movements, hunters or pig farm workers. However, the increase recently in outbreaks in non-commercial backyard pig farms could be indicative of the seasonality of raising pigs for fattening for the Christmas market and has been seen in Russia in previous years (FAO, 2013).

Commercially produced meat from the affected regions cannot be traded as fresh or frozen meat to other member states. However there are concerns around pork products from non-EU countries entering the EU in passenger luggage and then being discarded in areas where wild boar are present. Publicity campaigns are in place to discourage EU nationals from bringing pork products into UK. The movement of wild boar, caught up and taken to another MS for restocking hunting grounds is not allowed.

Conclusion

The risk of ASF introduction to the UK was previously raised to “low” in August 2017. This was because despite the relatively low level of legal trade in live pigs or commercially produced pig products, there could be a risk from the fomite pathway involving movement of people and vehicles from affected Eastern EU countries and the evidence around the findings of contaminated non-EU origin pig products detected in the EU. This risk is showing no sign of decreasing, and it is vital that visitors to the EU Member States understand the impact of bringing personal food items which are discarded for wildlife to pick up. Similarly, visitors to affected areas that have any contact with the environment around wild boar cases should be vigilant about cleaning and disinfecting any vehicles, clothing, footwear or equipment, including hunting equipment, which may be contaminated. Hunters visiting affected areas should not bring back “trophies” as these could be contaminated.

The current risk of ASF introduction to the UK is therefore still considered to be “low”, although the situation is being kept under review.

We would like to highlight to all pig keepers and the public to ensure pigs are not fed catering waste, kitchen scraps or pork products, thereby observing the swill feeding ban. All pig keepers should be aware that visitors to their premises should not have had recent contact with affected regions. Anybody returning from the affected EU MSs should avoid contact with domestic pigs, whether commercial holdings or smallholdings, areas with feral

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pigs or wild boar, until they are confident they have no contaminated clothing, footwear or equipment. Pig keepers and veterinarians should remind themselves of the clinical signs for ASF, which may not always be immediately obvious, as this virus appears to have reduced pathogenicity according to some disease reports. Any suspect cases must be reported promptly.

A campaign to highlight the dangers of swill feeding has been launched and more information can be found on this [link](#). Please see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/african-swine-fever> for more information. We would like to remind the public that any feeding of meat products, including the feeding of swill, kitchen scraps and catering waste, to wild boar or feral pigs is also illegal.

We will continue to monitor the situation.

Authors

Dr Paul Gale

Dr Francesca Gauntlett

Dr Helen Roberts

Jonathan Smith

References

All disease reports are available from the OIE WAHIS database.

Council Directive 92/65/EEC

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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at iadm@apha.gsi.gov.uk