

Updated Outbreak Assessment #16

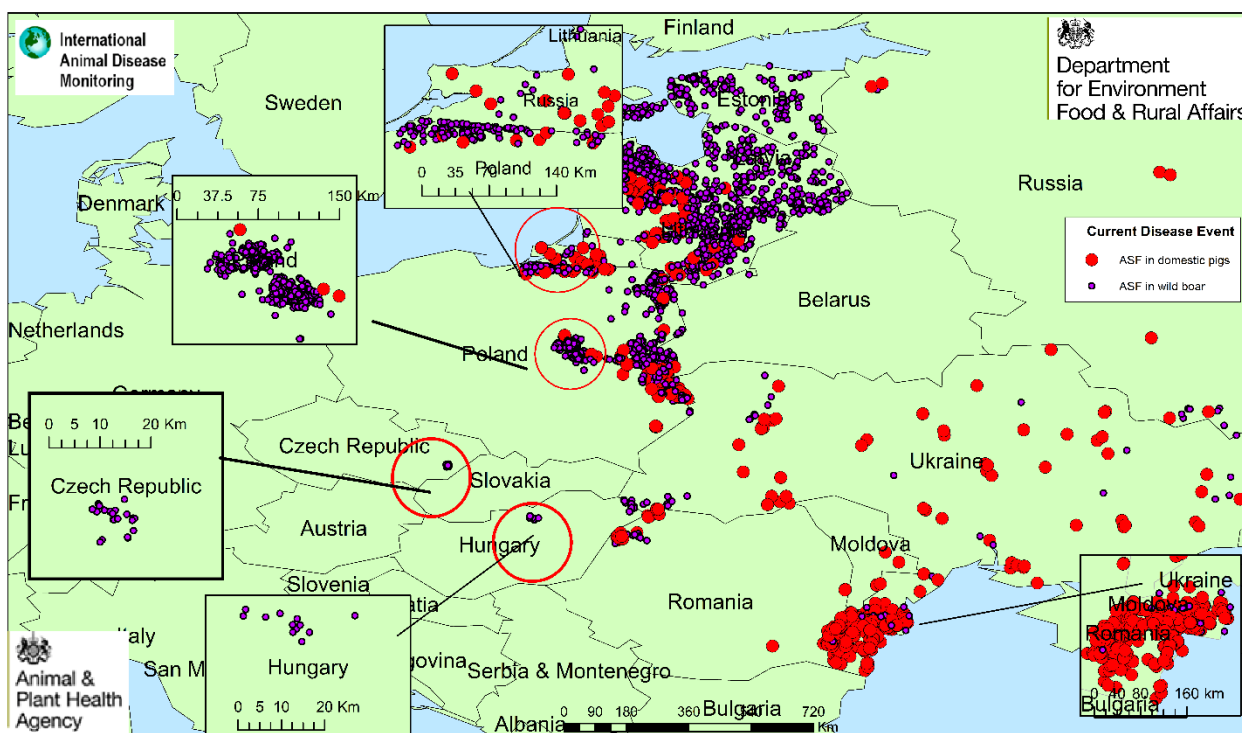
African Swine fever in Eastern Europe

23 August 2018

Ref: VITT/1200 ASF in Eastern Europe

Disease report

Since our last update on 25th June 2018, cases of African Swine Fever (ASF) have continued to be reported in wild boar and outbreaks in domestic pigs in Eastern Europe and western Eurasia (see map). While ASF has not moved substantially westward across Europe since the reports in wild boar in the Czech Republic in June 2017, outbreaks in backyard pigs in Romania have increased exponentially and the disease has recently jumped west within Romania, likely from the south-east part of the country near the border with Ukraine and there are now 9 regions reporting outbreaks in backyard domestic pigs (Bihar, Braila, Calarasi, Constanta, Galati, Ialomita, Ilfov, Satu Mare and Tulcea). In addition outbreaks have occurred in pig farms in northern Poland along the border with Kaliningrad. During July and August, ASF outbreaks have been reported in some large pig farms (>1,000 pigs) particularly in the northern parts of Eastern Europe (non-EU and EU).



Actual Scale 1:12,500,000

Date prepared 22/08/2018

Map prepared by IDM

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

The numbers of outbreaks in domestic pigs (i.e. backyard and commercial) in July and August are summarised in the table below for each country.

Table. Numbers of outbreaks in domestic pigs (i.e. backyard and commercial) in July and August 2018

	July	*August	Total
Latvia	4	3	7
Lithuania	20	6	26
Moldova	2	1	7
Poland	36	25	61
Romania	343	189	532
Russia	16	0	16
Ukraine	12	7	19
Hungary	0	0	0
Total	431	230	661
*To 22 nd August 2018			

Hungary: Although no outbreaks in domestic pigs have been reported in Hungary, it is present in wild boar in two regions of the country. In April, the first cases were reported in central Hungary probably linked to movement of migrant workers from Ukraine with an outbreak in wild boar reported in the Heves region the last cases were in mid-July, and none have been reported for late July/August. Three further cases in wild boar have been reported in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg near the north-east border with Ukraine in late July, although there were no cases in early July. Movement of infected wild boar over the border from neighbouring Ukraine is the most likely source of infection.

Poland: Although there have been no further westward jumps of ASF since December 2017 in Poland, 56 domestic pig outbreaks have been reported in July/Aug and multiple wild boar cases are still being reported in regions bordering Kaliningrad in the north and in the regions around the city of Warsaw and particularly along the border with Belarus. Many of the domestic pig outbreaks have involved pig farms along the eastern border with Belarus although some are around Warsaw. Most are small pig farms although some are larger (up to 2,000 pigs). In addition ASF has been reported in several pig farms along the northern border with Kaliningrad with one farm in late July of over 1,100 pigs.

Russian Federation: In west Russia there have been two outbreaks in large pig farms (12,000 and 37,000 pigs) and 11 backyard pig outbreaks in July/August together with wild boar cases. Three outbreaks of ASF have been reported in pig farms in the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad north of Poland together with 6 backyard outbreaks and 18 cases in wild boar. One of the pig farms had over 100,000 pigs.

Lithuania: There is regular reporting of cases in wild boar. In addition Lithuania reported 23 outbreaks in domestic pigs. Most of these were in backyard premises with fewer than 10 pigs. However, one in the Akmene region involved a pig farm with 10,000 pigs in early August.

Latvia: There have been over 95 reported cases in wild boar in July/August to date, and seven backyard pig outbreaks. In addition there was an outbreak in a large pig farm with 16,000 pigs.

Czech Republic: ASFV emerged for the first time in June 2017 in the Zlin region with cases in wild boar and no cases in wild boar have been reported since mid-April 2018.

Romania: In July/August some more than 500 outbreaks of ASF have been reported in Romania, mainly in backyard pigs in two areas affected previously: the south-east around Tulcea county on the Ukraine border and in the north-west around Satu Mare county near the border with Hungary/Ukraine. The region around Tulcea is particularly badly affected with multiple outbreak clusters. Not surprisingly, ASF has spread westwards from Tulcea during July into backyard pigs in neighbouring counties of Constanta and Ialomita and Braila. ASF is also spreading west and south from Satu Mare county with multiple outbreaks in backyard pigs in Bihor county near to Hungary ongoing from early July and a case in wild boar in Calarasi county in late July, respectively. An outbreak in backyard pigs in a new area (Galati) near the border with Moldova was reported in late July. On the 19 August, ASF was reported in backyard pigs in a new area in Ilfov county some 200 km west of Tulcea county. The EU Veterinary Emergency Team visit to Romania in July 2018 concluded that the source of infection initially was an epidemic wave of infected wild boar from Ukraine, crossing the Danube delta. Experts consider that hunting wild boar in such a situation is not advantageous until the epidemic period is over, but once a degree of stability is reached, control measures should include control of wild boar (EUVET, 2018).

Moldova: Three outbreaks of ASF was reported in backyard pigs in Moldova and also a case in wild boar in mid-August.

Ukraine: Sixteen outbreaks have been reported across Ukraine in July/August. Although these are mainly in domestic backyard pigs, some outbreaks have occurred in larger commercial pig farms. A few cases have also been reported in wild boar. The western border of Ukraine is a source of ASF for neighbouring EU countries including Hungary and Romania and also Moldova.

Situation assessment

ASF is continuing to spread within Eastern Europe, although there is no evidence of spread westwards in the EU. There are two trends observed which are cause for concern. First is the spread and number of outbreaks in the large non-commercial backyard pig sector in Romania; the latest reports indicate a large jump into Ilfov county some 200 km west of Tulcea county where the number of cases in non-commercial backyard pigs has increased exponentially. Understanding how disease is spreading so rapidly in the backyard sector in the area is vital to designing effective control measures. The second is the increase in outbreaks in large commercial pig farms (>1,000 pigs) in countries including Russia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine. An outbreak of ASF has also been reported in late July for the first time in a large pig farm (>1,000 pigs) along the northern border of Poland near the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad, therefore controls on the commercial production of pork products will rely heavily on effective ante and post mortem inspections.

Some 95,000 kg of total pork meat has been legally imported to the UK in 2018 to date from Romania and a similar amount from Poland (HMRC Trade Stats). Commercially

produced meat from the ASF-affected regions cannot be traded as fresh or frozen meat to other member states.

However there are concerns around ASF-contaminated or infected pork products from non-EU countries entering the EU in passenger luggage and then being discarded in areas where wild boar or outdoor pigs are present. Publicity campaigns are in place to discourage EU nationals from bringing pork products into UK, but keepers should also be aware of this high risk activity.

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 / infected non-EU origin pig products detected in the EU (according to presentations by Hungary and Slovakia at PAFF this year). 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 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.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Animal and Plant Health Agency
Advice Services - International Disease Monitoring

We will continue to monitor the situation.

Authors

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References

All disease reports are available from the OIE WAHIS database.

EUVET (2018) Mission of the European Union Veterinary Emergency Team (EUVET) to Romania. https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/reg-com_ahw_20180712_pres_asf-euвет_rou.pdf Accessed 22/08/2018

See also:

Slovakia (2018) https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/reg-com_ahw_20180613_pres_asf_svk.pdf page 28 Accessed 22/08/2018

Hungary (2018) https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/reg-com_ahw_20180418_pres_asf_hun.pdf page 10 Accessed 22/08/2018



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