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

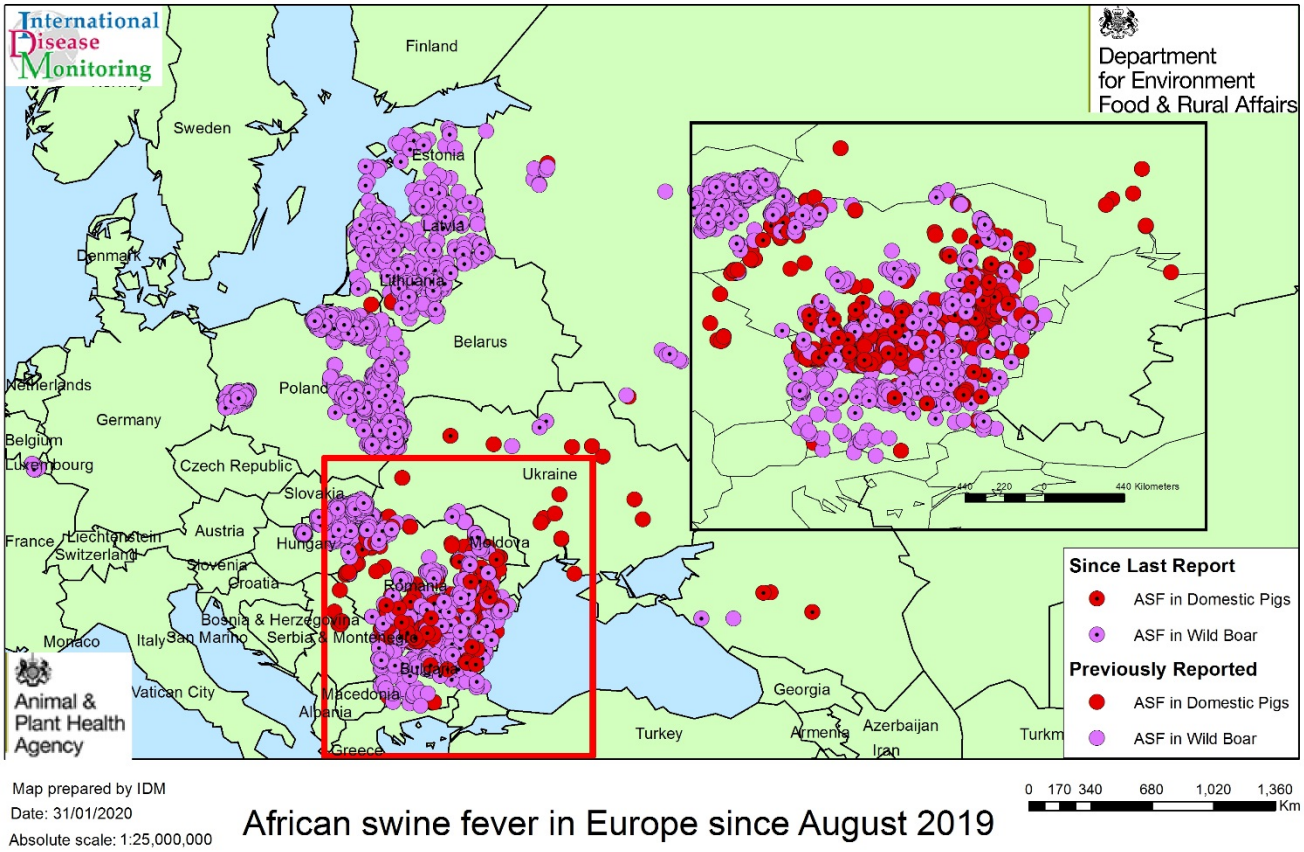
Updated Outbreak Assessment #08

African swine fever in Europe (Eastern Europe & Belgium)

31 January 2020 Ref: VITT/1200 ASF in Europe (Eastern Europe & Belgium)

Disease report

Since our last report on the 19th December 2019 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/846901/asf-europe-update6.pdf], there have been new outbreaks of ASF in domestic pigs, and more cases in wild boar, in Eastern Europe. ASF-infected wild boar continue to be found in the west of Poland, with some now only 30km away from the German border. In early January, Serbia reported its first cases of ASF in wild boar, after several cases in domestic pigs last summer.



African swine fever in Europe since August 2019

Situation assessment

Since the last report in December, outbreaks in domestic pigs have only been observed in **Bulgaria**, **Romania** and **Ukraine,** with a few in west Russia (Table 1). The majority of these involved backyard small holdings, though both Bulgaria and Romania have reported outbreaks on commercial holdings; one in Romania (24,614 pigs), and two in Bulgaria on large industrial farms close to the city of Varna, affecting over 60,000 pigs in total. It is interesting to note that Hungary has, to date, not reported any outbreaks in domestic pigs, despite the large number of infected wild boar.

Poland and **Hungary** continue to report high numbers of cases of ASF in wild boar (Table 2), with many in the west of Poland, close to the German border (see above map). Cases in wild boar are still being reported in central Hungary around Budapest, representing the most westerly occurrence in Hungary at present.

The **German** authorities have begun building fences along the Polish border in the state of Brandenburg, and it is intended that an electric fence will be erected in Saxony along a high risk sector of the border with Poland (PorkBusiness, 2020). This is in addition to the fences constructed within Poland to prevent spread between provinces. Some states in Germany have relaxed laws around hunting in an effort to reduce wild boar numbers (PigProgress, 2020).

At the beginning of January, **Serbia** reported cases of ASF in wild boar, along the eastern borders with Bulgaria and Romania. This is the first time that ASF has been reported in the country since August 2019, and the first report in wild boar in Serbia. Serbian authorities are aiming to control the outbreak through shooting of wild boar across the country (PigProgress, 2020).

Moldova reported an outbreak of ASF in domestic pigs at the end of January. The outbreak was in a small backyard farm (34 pigs), but is the first time the disease has been reported in domestic pigs in the country since September 2019 (OIE, 2020). ASF continues to circulate in wild boar in Moldova, with a large increase in cases in January 2020 comparative to all months of 2019.

There have been 138 cases of ASF in wild boar in **Bulgaria** since November 2019 to date. Some are close to the borders of currently ASF-free North **Macedonia** and **Greece,** both of which are already on high alert; having been identified as two of the nine Balkan countries to have a very high chance (66-100%) of disease spread inside their borders, within a year of introduction, in a recent EFSA risk assessment (EFSA, 2019).

It was reported at a recent PAFF committee that **Greece** has increased both passive (sampling all wild boar found dead and all domestic pigs found dead or sick), and active surveillance (sampling hunted/shot animals, all backyard pigs and a specific number from commercial pig premises), close to the border with Bulgaria for domestic pigs, and throughout the country for wild boar. Additional laboratory resource for analysing ASF samples is being prepared, along with additional reagents and consumables (PAFF, 2020).

One more “bones-only” wild boar carcass which tested positive for ASFV DNA was reported in **Belgium** on 7th January, following similar occurrences in October, November

and December. The remains of this latest wild boar carcass were found in the Infected Zone, and estimated to have been there for at least 3 months (ADNS, 2020).

Table 1: Numbers of ASF outbreaks reported in domestic pigs (backyard and commercial) since June 2019 (up to 30 January 2020). All data from ADNS and OIE.

Country	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Belgium	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bulgaria	0	28	7	3	3	0	3	6	49
Czech Republic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Estonia	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
Hungary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Latvia	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Lithuania	5	8	2	2	2	0	0	0	19
Moldova	0	3	16	4	0	0	0	0	23
Poland	7	23	12	1	2	0	0	0	45
Slovakia	0	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	11
Serbia	0	1	16	1	0	0	0	0	18
Romania	74	530	550	199	103	103	65	88	1712
Russia	1	4	24	40	7	2	0	0	78
Ukraine	4	8	7	3	2	3	0	1	28
Total	91	608	643	253	119	108	68	95	1985

Table 2: Numbers of ASF cases reported in wild boar since June 2019 (to 30 January 2020). All data from ADNS and OIE.

Country	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Belgium	9	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	16
Bulgaria	1	13	29	11	18	44	38	71	225
Czech Republic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Estonia	4	5	5	5	8	4	3	7	41
Hungary	37	64	122	165	191	156	175	365	1275
Latvia	16	41	28	20	41	52	27	45	270
Lithuania	38	48	23	22	41	23	29	34	262
Moldova	0	0	4	0	1	0	4	24	33
Poland	114	148	177	97	174	210	345	413	1678
Romania	38	59	90	56	51	57	84	152	587
Russia	0	8	9	6	4	2	9	1	39
Serbia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	9
Slovakia	0	0	6	5	4	3	9	11	38
Ukraine	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	2	6
Total	257	390	495	387	534	553	724	1135	4475

Conclusion

The risk remains at **medium** for the entry of contaminated or infected products into UK at present.

Border checks on passengers are paramount, as are publicity campaigns aimed at reaching the travelling public and reminding them that bringing back products of animal origin from outside the EU or from a region in the EU under disease restrictions is not allowed. Commercially produced products which can be safely traded in the EU will be labelled as such. Home produced products, for which the origins of the pork used are unclear, are a particular concern.

Travellers from an affected area in the EU or anywhere in Asia and Africa must not bring back products of pig origin – including ham, sausages or pâté – or any equipment or other goods which could potentially be contaminated with ASF virus, to the UK. Travellers from Asia and other third country areas who bring meat or dairy products can also face prosecution and a large fine. Disease can be spread by pig keepers and members of the public feeding catering waste, kitchen scraps or pork products to their livestock. It is illegal to do so.

The risk of exposure to the pig population in the UK is highly dependent on the level of biosecurity on individual pig premises but is still considered to be **low**.

We will continue to monitor the situation.

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All disease reports are available from the OIE WAHIS database.

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