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

Updated Outbreak Assessment #16

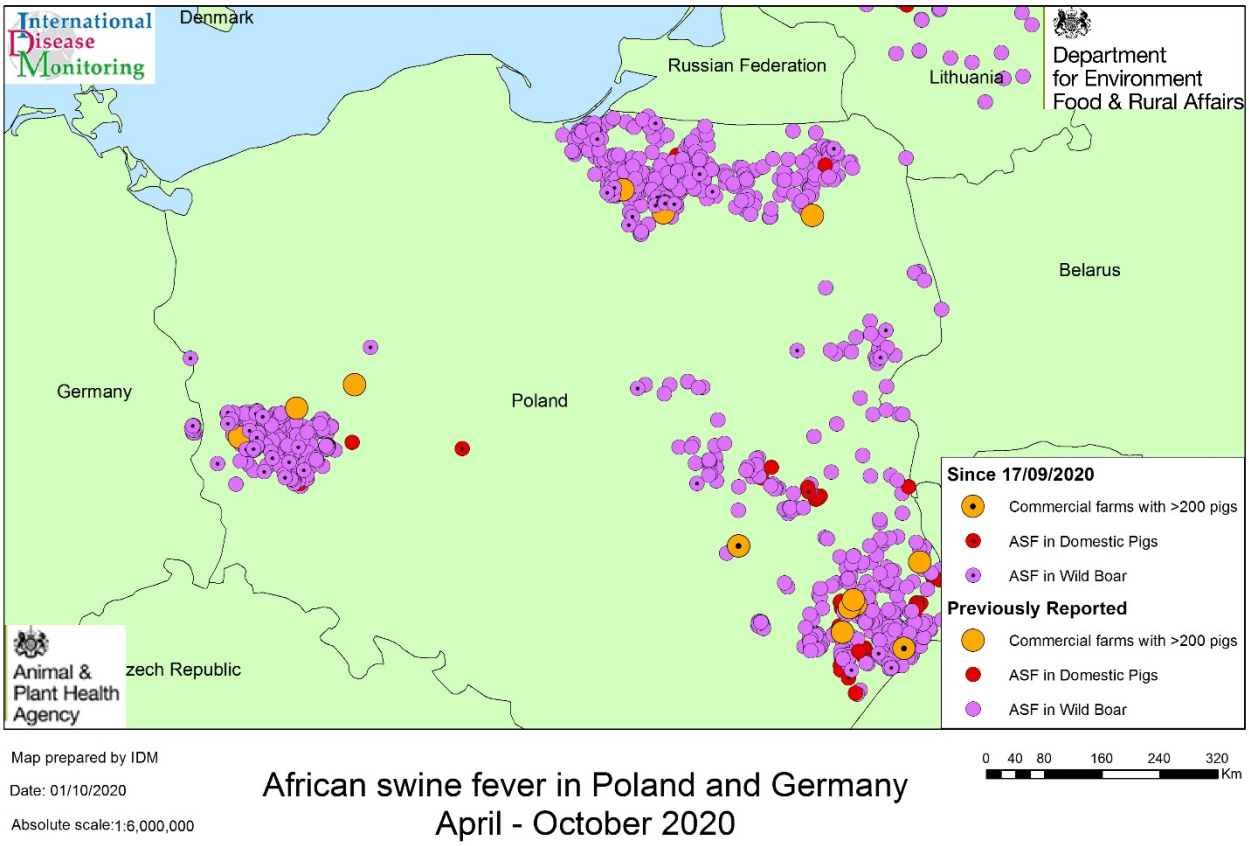
# African swine fever in Europe (Eastern Europe and Germany)

2 October 2020

Ref: VITT/1200 ASF in Europe (Eastern Europe and Germany)

## Disease report

This is a short update on the spread of African swine fever (ASF) in wild boar in **Germany** since our last report on 17 September. The map below shows the locations of the ASF cases in wild boar in eastern Germany and Poland, together with the outbreaks in domestic pigs in Poland reported from January to end of September 2020. Of note, ASF is moving north in wild boar both in eastern Germany and in western **Poland**, albeit ~150 km apart.




African swine fever in Poland and Germany
April - October 2020

## Situation assessment

The total number of confirmed cases of ASF reported in **Germany** to the end of September is now at 38, since the first report on the 10 September. All are in wild boar (either shot or found dead) in the State of Brandenburg, with no domestic pig farms affected so far. However, the virus has been identified further north along the Germany/Poland border and there are now two separate outbreaks in the State of Brandenburg (see map).

On 29 September an infected wild boar was shot some 60 km north of the first outbreak, where the other 37 cases have all occurred. Of these, 28 were found in the Oder-Spree district and nine in the Spree-Neisse district (Pig Progress 2020a). The 37 cases are all located between a few hundred metres and up to 6 km from each other inside a core area of 150 $km^2$, which was established and provisionally fenced on 12 September. The new case was near the hamlet of Bleyen in Märkisch-Oderland district and is about 2 km from the border with Poland (Lehmann, 2020, Lehnert, 2020). The boar was a young one (<1 year) and with a pack of 10 – 15 wild boars in a corn field. Post mortem examination showed pathology of organs indicative for ASF which was confirmed by PCR. The low Ct values indicated a high virus load. More ASFV-positive boar are expected to be found and surveillance of domestic pig holdings has not detected anything suspicious.

The location of the infected wild boar in Märkisch-Oderland is notable in that there have not been any reports of infected wild boar on the other side of the border in Poland at this latitude (see map). This new case represents a geographical jump similar to that as for the first German ASF case in wild boar (decomposed carcase of an infected female) at Oder-Spree, found on the 9 September, with the nearest known ASF detection being in Poland located some 30 km away (see previous Outbreak Assessment). For that first case reported in Germany, the geographical jump of 30 km could be explained by male wild boar travelling that large distance, although this is less likely for a female wild boar. Alternatively, the carcass of an infected animal that may have floated down the Oder River is another possibility for the source of infection (Pig Progress 2020a). The border between Poland and Germany runs from north to south and is formed by two rivers. In the south, this is the Neisse River, which extends from south of Eisenhüttenstadt and joins the larger Oder River. The Oder then forms the border river until it reaches the Baltic Sea in the north. The first group of ASFV-infected wild boar in Germany were found at exactly the same latitude as the confluence of these two rivers (Pig Progress 2020a), suggesting that transmission via the waterway was a distinct possibility.

The authorities in Brandenburg State are erecting mobile fences in a 15 km radius around this new location. In addition, all hunting is forbidden and surveillance is being stepped up to find other carcasses (Pig Progress 2020a).The authorities in Brandenburg are to invest €6 million in the construction of a permanent stable fence as far north as Spree-Neisse before it joins the River Oder. Construction of a fence at the border in the Oder-Spree district is also expected to commence in early October. The two rivers bordering Germany

and Poland, namely the Oder and the Neisse, have now been equipped with electronic temporary fences to restrict entry of wild boar (Pig Progress 2020a). However, these may not be sufficient as there are videos which show that wild boar are able to avoid these electronic fences by swimming a short distance along the river. The search for wild boar carcases in Germany has been intensified with the use of sniffer dogs, helicopters using thermal imaging cameras, and drones (Pig Progress 2020b).

ASF in western **Poland** has also moved further north, with the finding of an infected wild boar carcass north of Poznan, an area where to date ASF has not previously been detected. It is 73 km north of previous reports and roughly 150 km east of the 'new' most northerly German wild boar report (see map). The number of domestic pig outbreaks in Poland increased significantly between April and August with 20 reported to date for September (Table 1), and the year 2020 has now officially passed 2018 as the year with the most domestic pig farms being infected in Poland (Pig Progress 2020a). The count is now 97 farms infected during 2020 (Table 1), in mostly backyard facilities, but there are also several commercial pig farms. In Western Poland, close to the German border, there have so far been 12 farms infected. Three of those farms had more than 1,000 pigs on-site (Pig Progress 2020a).

In addition to Poland, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia have also reported domestic pig outbreaks of ASF in September (Table 1). Hungary and Poland continue to report high numbers of wild boar cases (Table 2).

Table 1: Domestic pig outbreaks in 2020 in Eastern Europe

| Country | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bulgaria | 6 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 18 |
| Latvia | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Lithuania | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Moldova | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Poland | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 16 | 56 | 20 | 97 |
| Romania | 93 | 56 | 47 | 30 | 37 | 53 | 92 | 165 | 156 | 729 |
| Serbia | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 0 | 3 | 15 |
| Slovakia | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 10 | 6 | 17 |
| Ukraine | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 14 |
| **Total** | **100** | **62** | **55** | **35** | **39** | **60** | **123** | **238** | **185** | **897** |

Table 2: Wild boar cases in 2020 in Europe

| Country | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Belgium | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Bulgaria | 148 | 70 | 63 | 25 | 20 | 14 | 30 | 33 | 22 | 425 |
| Estonia | 7 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 45 |
| Germany | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 38 | 38 |
| Hungary | 425 | 413 | 533 | 777 | 495 | 327 | 251 | 201 | 111 | 3533 |

| Country | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Latvia | 44 | 19 | 22 | 18 | 12 | 26 | 36 | 20 | 21 | 218 |
| Lithuania | 38 | 13 | 18 | 15 | 15 | 21 | 26 | 12 | 12 | 170 |
| Moldova | 0 | 2 | 15 | 9 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 30 |
| Poland | 559 | 563 | 713 | 461 | 287 | 203 | 131 | 214 | 161 | 3292 |
| Romania | 176 | 111 | 99 | 59 | 54 | 45 | 48 | 54 | 29 | 675 |
| Russia | 13 | 10 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 15 | 20 | 3 | 67 |
| Serbia | 22 | 12 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 41 |
| Slovakia | 12 | 8 | 30 | 37 | 28 | 10 | 13 | 14 | 24 | 176 |
| Ukraine | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| **Total** | **1447** | **1228** | **1508** | **1406** | **917** | **654** | **561** | **572** | **424** | **8717** |

## Conclusion

In Germany, ASF in wild boar has been reported some 60 km further north along the border with Poland with the finding of a positive wild boar shot at the end of September. This is not near to any wild boar cases in Poland, where ASF is also moving north in wild boar, albeit 150 km directly east of the German case. Poland is still reporting high numbers of ASF outbreaks in domestic pigs. ASF is still present in wild boar across much of Eastern Europe. Therefore, there still remains a risk of entry of ASF virus in products of animal origin from affected countries, including from illegal imports.

The current risk of ASF being introduced into the UK through the entry of contaminated or infected pork or pork products, remains at **medium**.

All travellers are strongly advised to avoid bringing any pork products – for example, dried or cured meats, sausages, salamis or pâté – back to the UK from affected parts of Europe. Travellers from Asia and other third country areas who bring meat or dairy products can also face prosecution and a large fine.

We would like to emphasise to all pig keepers, pig producers, smallholders and general public to ensure pigs are not fed catering waste, kitchen scraps or pork products, thereby observing the swill feeding ban.

All pig keepers should remain vigilant and ensure that any visitors to their premises have not had any recent contact with pigs or pig premises in the affected regions. People returning from any ASF-affected areas of the world should avoid any contact with domestic pigs in commercial holdings, smallholdings or even household pet pigs. Habitats where feral pigs or wild boar exist should also be avoided. All clothing, footwear or equipment should be disinfected before entering pig areas.

Pig keepers and veterinarians should remind themselves of the clinical signs for ASF. Any suspect cases must be reported promptly. Please see https://www.gov.uk/guidance/african-swine-fever for more information

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We will continue to monitor the situation.

**Authors**

Dr Paul Gale
Joe Bowen
Dr Francesca Gauntlett
Dr Lévon Stephan MRCVS

## References

All disease reports are available from the OIE WAHIS database.

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