

## Updated Outbreak Assessment #2

# African Swine Fever in the Dominican Republic and Haiti

21 September 2021

Ref: VITTT/1200 ASF in The Dominican Republic

### Disease report

Since our Preliminary Outbreak Assessment on [29 July 2021](#), there have been a further 55 officially confirmed reports of African Swine Fever (ASF) in the Dominican Republic. ASF has now been confirmed in 16 of the 31 provinces in the Dominican Republic. All 57 outbreaks (to 21 September) reported by World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) are in backyard holdings, including three community-type backyard farms, affecting a total of approximately 6,900 animals.

Domestic control measures including zoning, increased surveillance, movement controls and quarantine, have been applied. Genotype 2, which is the same as the strain circulating in Europe and Asia, has been confirmed through sequencing (Pig333, 2021a).

On 20 September 2021 ASF was reported in Haiti by OIE, in the south-eastern province of Belle-Anse, on the border with the Dominican Republic. ASF was confirmed in samples submitted on 26 August 2021, from a farm listed as a backyard holding, with 2,500 susceptible animals, of which 234 have died and a further 750 have been slaughtered. This is the first time ASF has been reported in Haiti since 1984.

**Map 1: showing outbreaks of ASF in the Dominican Republic and Haiti**



Map prepared by IDM

Date: 22/09/2021

Absolute scale: 1:29,012,309

### African swine fever in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, September 2021

## Outbreak data

Details of all outbreaks and cases provided in this report sourced from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) database, unless stated otherwise.

## Situation assessment

Since our previous report, ASF has spread across much of the Dominican Republic, with disease confirmed in 16 of 31 provinces. ASF was initially reported in the Dominican Republic by OIE on 29 July 2021, with two outbreaks disclosed on 01 July in community-type backyard operations. However, there have since been further reports by OIE, which have much earlier suspected onset of clinical signs, as far back as April 2021, with additional outbreaks suspected to have started throughout May, June, and July.

These were all backyard holdings and reported by OIE in August. Since then, to date, 18 further outbreaks have been reported by OIE as disclosed in August and one in September, taking the total to 57. Most are in backyard premises with fewer than 100 pigs, although three involve community-type backyard operations with around 1,000 pigs.

According to media reports (Pig333, 2021a) sequencing of ASFV in the Dominican Republic has identified the 'Georgia 2007 wild-type strain', genotype 2. Genotype 2 ASF viruses derived from the Georgia 2007 strain are currently circulating in regions of Europe and Asia. The cases of African swine fever that occurred in the Dominican Republic in 1978 and until their eradication in 1981, were attributed to ASF virus genotype 1 (Pig 333 ,2021a).

The government of the Dominican Republic has allocated almost \$700,000 US dollars for compensation to swine producers affected by ASF, however there is reported uncertainty among small producers, who fear culling of healthy pigs (Pig Progress, 2021).

On 20 September 2021, the OIE confirmed that ASF had spread to Haiti. The affected farm is a backyard holding with 2,500 susceptible animals located in the City of Anse-à-Pitre, very close to the border with the Dominican Republic. Control measures are in place according to OIE, including surveillance, quarantine, and screening. The spread of ASF to Haiti is not unexpected given the disease situation in neighbouring Dominican Republic, socio-economic difficulties, and recent natural disasters.

Pork and pork products from the Dominican Republic and Haiti are currently prohibited from entry into the United States of America (USA) as a result of existing CSF restrictions. Additionally, the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has increased inspections of flights from Hispaniola to ensure travellers do not bring prohibited products to the USA. CBP is also ensuring that waste from these aeroplanes is properly disposed of to prevent the transmission of ASF.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) continues to assist both countries, offering testing support, and consultation on additional steps or actions to support response and mitigation measures (USDA, 2021).

During the last outbreak of ASF in the Dominican Republic in 1978 to 1980, the infection spread to Haiti, Cuba, and Brazil. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (FAO, 2021) has recently published an alert to call upon nearby countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to review their contingency or emergency response plans for ASF.

Columbia and Mexico have already implemented precautionary measures following the confirmation of ASF in the Dominican Republic, with Columbia inspecting all commercial, cargo and passenger vessels and luggage for pork and pork products (Pig333, 2021b)

## Conclusion

ASF is spreading across the Dominican Republic following the initial reports in late July, although it is clear that the disease had been present for several months before detection, with the first date of suspicion now being 10 April 2021, according to OIE. The concern raised in our earlier assessment, that disease may jump to other countries in the Caribbean or in South America, has been confirmed with transmission across the border to Haiti.

ASF is currently circulating in eastern Europe and Asia. Publicity campaigns are in place in the UK to inform the public and discourage individuals from bringing pork products into UK. This includes targeted messages to key stakeholders such as road hauliers, hunters, pig keepers and veterinarians. [Read more about emerging diseases in pigs on ADHB website](#)

The risk of ASFV entry to the UK was raised to **medium** in August 2018 as a result of the number of outbreaks of ASF being reported in Eastern Europe, and its subsequent emergence in wild boar in Belgium in September 2018 (now ASF free) and then in Germany in September 2020.

The current risk of ASFV entry to the UK is still considered to be **medium**, despite the spread of ASF to and within Hispaniola.

We would like to remind all travellers that bringing in meat and meat products to the UK from outside the EU or Switzerland is prohibited [Find out more information in guidance on GOV.UK](#). This includes any pork products – for example, dried or cured meats, sausages, salamis, or pâté. Travellers from the Americas, sub-Saharan Africa and other third country areas who bring meat or dairy products can also face prosecution and a large fine.

Illegal importation of infected pork meat from affected parts of the Americas presents a potential route of entry of ASFV into the UK. There are also ongoing concerns around infected pork products originating from affected countries entering the UK in passenger luggage and the subsequent waste being discarded in areas where wild boar or domestic pigs could access them.

Although the UK has now left the European Union, there has been no change to the rules for passengers travelling into Great Britain from the EU with products of an animal origin since January 2021, but Great Britain will be bringing in controls in July 2022. This is as part of our ongoing commitment to ease the burden felt by businesses and travellers and to allow ports of entry longer to prepare

We would like to highlight the importance of observing the swill feeding ban to all pig keepers, pig producers, smallholders and to the general public thereby ensuring pigs are not fed catering waste, kitchen scraps or pork products. 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 those regions affected by ASF.

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

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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 our [African swine fever guidance](#) for more information.

We will continue to monitor the situation.

## Authors

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