

Preliminary Outbreak Assessment

African swine fever in Spain

1 December 2025

Disease report

For the first time since African swine fever (ASF) genotype I was successfully eradicated from Spain in 1994, ASF has been detected in 2 dead wild boar in the country. The boar were found on 26 November 2025 in Barcelona, northeastern Spain, approximately 1km apart, and ASF was confirmed by RT-PCR on 27 November.

At present, it is not known how the virus was introduced to Spain or the genotype of the virus. The current genotype circulating across Europe is genotype II. The nearest detections of ASF to Spain are in northern Italy (WOAH), however, these are approximately 600km away from these cases. Large geographical jumps in ASF in Europe are well documented, generally being detected in wild boar first, as in Belgium in 2018, north-west Italy in 2022, and Sweden in 2023. The Official Veterinary Services of Catalonia have since implemented measures in accordance with Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687. These include setting up 20km infected zones, active search for and disposal of carcasses, a hunting ban, and reinforcement of passive surveillance and biosecurity measures on pig farms (MAPA, 2025). All farms within 20km of the cases have had movement restrictions for transport and slaughter imposed (Government of Catalonia, 2025a).

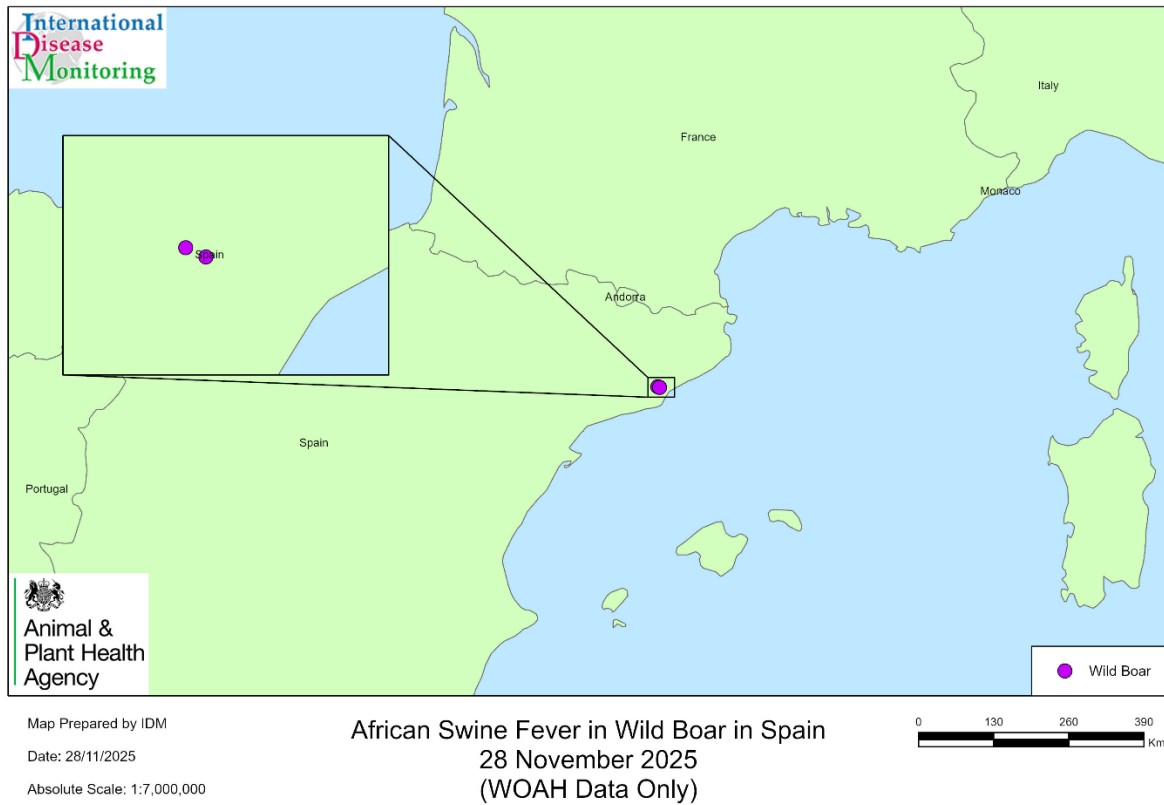


Figure 1: Map displaying the locations of the ASF positive wild boar in Spain (WOAH data only).

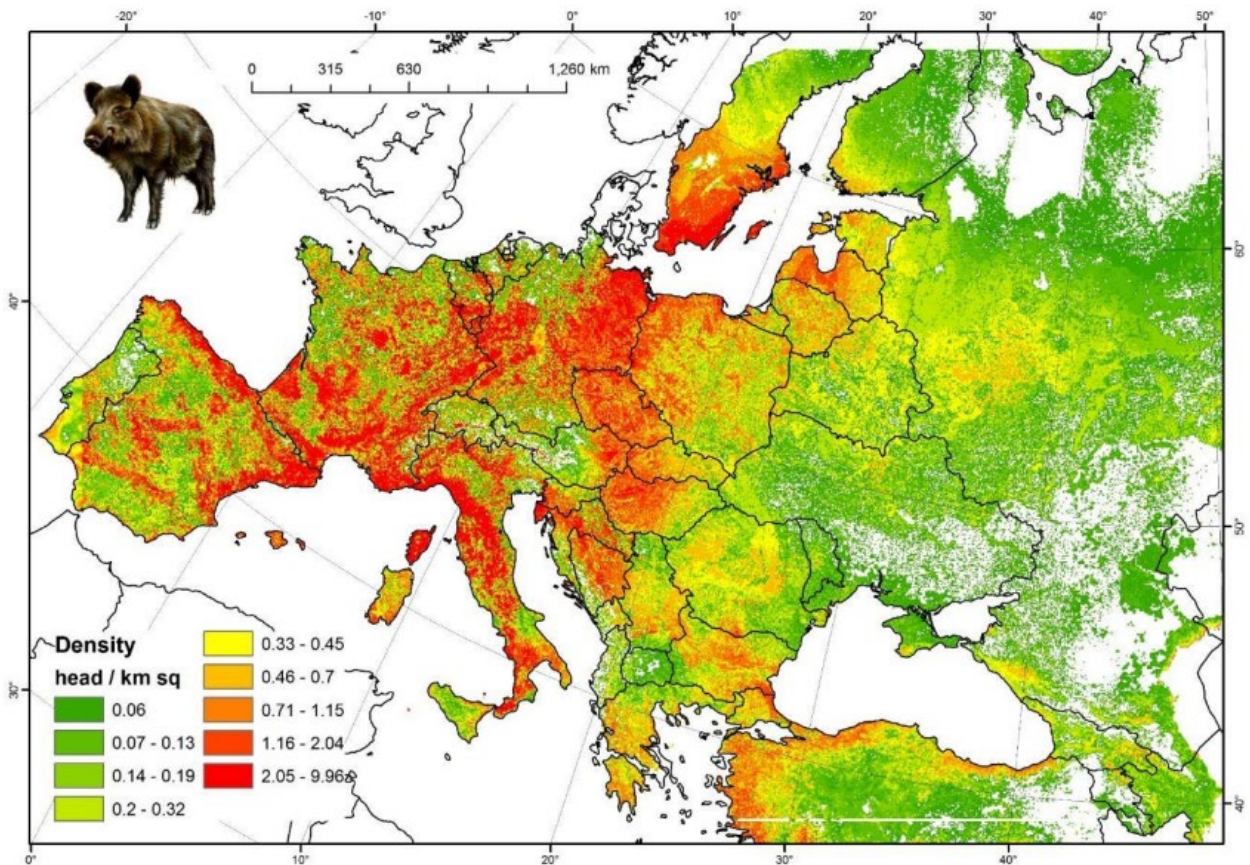


Figure 2: Map displaying wild boar density per km squared (Source: FAO/Targeted research effort on African swine fever (ASFORCE), 2015; Pittiglio and others, 2018).

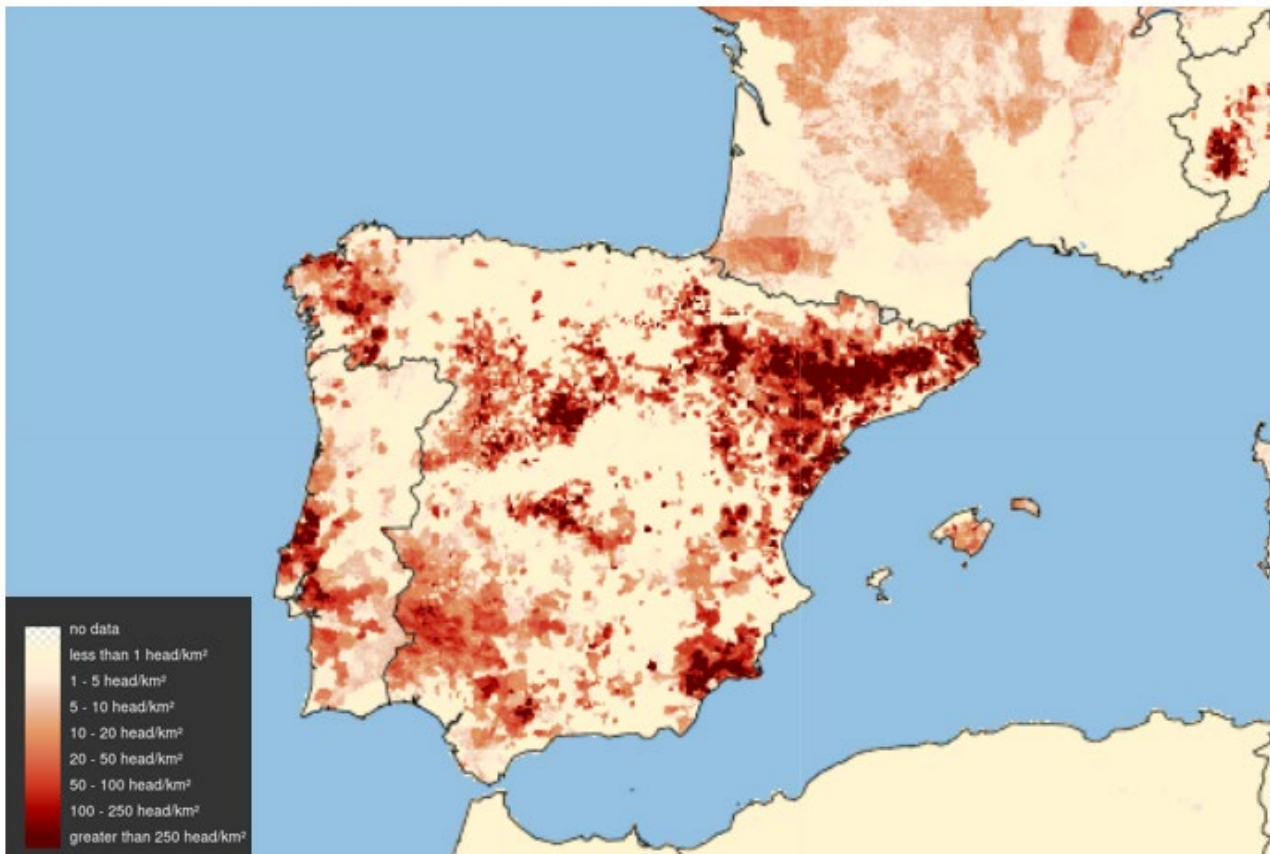


Figure 3: Map displaying domestic pig density in Spain (Source: Empres-i, 2025)

Situation assessment

ASF is still circulating across much of eastern Europe in both domestic pigs and wild boar. Spain is the largest pig producer in the European Union, with a 7% increase in production in 2025, compared to 2024 (AHDB, 2025). *Ornithodoros erraticus* ticks have been shown to act as reservoirs for ASF and have been detected in southern Spain and Portugal. From Pietschmann, Mur, Blome and others, these ticks led to persistence of the virus when it was circulating previously from the early 1960's to its eradication in 1994 (Canadian Food Inspection Agency, 2019) and were considered as a potential source of re-emergence of ASF in Portugal in 1999 (Pietschmann, Mur, Blome and others, 2016). A study undertaken by The Pirbright Institute in 2011 found that ticks can contain infectious virus for at least 5 years and 3 months after the removal of infectious hosts, making control and eradication of the disease more difficult. More recently, in 2023, from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, *Ornithodoros erraticus* have been detected in Castile and Leon, northeastern Spain. There are no known tick vectors in northern Europe (Folly and others, 2020).

Catalonia has historically been the largest producer of pig meat in Spain (Rubio-Ramon, 2025), which, in turn, has the largest domestic pig population in Europe, much of which is concentrated in the north-east. In Barcelona there has been a large population of urban wild boar in areas of high levels of human activity. There have been efforts to reduce the population after it expanded in recent years, and there have been efforts to reduce their access to [bins in the city](#). It remains a critical time for the spread of the virus throughout

Europe as well as into other regions through human-mediated routes such as introduction from non-commercial imports (including illegal imports) or fomites. Details on regionalisation will enable the import of pork into Great Britain, in line with the Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

[From 12 April 2025](#), it has been illegal for travellers to bring cattle, sheep, goat, and pig meat, as well as dairy products, from EU countries into Great Britain for personal use (personal imports) with very [limited exemptions](#). This is to cover the uncertainty introduced by the reports of Foot and Mouth Disease in Europe. Live animals, germinal products and untreated wool, hair, skins and hides are not permitted for personal import under separate rules.

Prior to this, on 1 September 2022, strict new controls were introduced restricting the movement of pork and pork products into Great Britain from the European Union (EU) and European Free Trade Association states. It is no longer legal to personally bring in pork or pork products weighing over 2 kilograms unless they are produced to the EU's commercial standards. This did not apply to commercial imports, which remain unaffected by the control, but Great Britain will be bringing in further controls. Although this legislation does not currently apply to non-commercial imports of pork products less than 2 kg from the EU (although the 12 April 2025 restrictions currently do).

It remains illegal for travellers to import meat or dairy products from Asia and other non-EU country areas. Swill feeding any animal, whether pigs, poultry, ruminants, or wildlife is illegal and has the potential to cause substantial harm. We would like to emphasise to all pig keepers, pig producers, smallholders, and the general public to ensure pigs are not fed catering waste, kitchen scraps or pork products, thereby observing the swill feeding ban. All pig keepers, whether commercial holdings or not, should remain vigilant and ensure that any visitors or seasonal workers have not had any recent contact with pigs, pig products, pig premises, wild boar (including hunting) or equipment associated with such activities in the affected regions in Europe or other affected parts of the world. As with all biosecurity, these measures are only as effective as the people using them, so proper training should be provided.

Conclusion

For the first time since 1994, cases of ASF in wild boar have been documented in Spain. The carcasses were reported to have been fresh, and in close proximity to the Autonomous University of Barcelona. Cases of ASF in urban areas have been previously reported in Belgium and Rome, where disease was contained with no involvement of domestic pigs.

From MAPA, the area has a moderate density of wild boar and within a 10km radius, there are 5 domestic pig farms. From the government of Catalonia (2025b), 39 pig farms were located in the surveillance zone and have all undergone clinical examinations, sampling and a review of biosecurity measures. ASF has not been detected in any of these

premises. A further 40 carcasses were discovered in the surveillance zone and are currently undergoing testing for ASF.

There is a significant distance between these cases and the recent outbreaks occurring in mainland Europe. Furthermore, EFSA (2019) report predicted that the natural median spread of ASF due to wild boar movements was between 2.9 and 11.7 km per year. This report also emphasised that human mediated translocation of ASF remains an important contributing factor to disease spread. Details of the genotype are unknown at this time and may indicate the origin and method of introduction. Further details of entry are expected following the initial reports, which we will monitor closely.

Given the above, we consider that the risk of entry of ASF virus in live animals and products of animal origin (POAO) from affected countries, remains at MEDIUM (occurs regularly).

The potential high risk for non-commercial imports of pork products from ASF affected areas remains of high concern. Evidence from inspections at Great Britain ports suggest that there are several vehicles illegally bringing pork meat into Great Britain from some regions of the EU affected by ASF. Some of these instances involved large quantities of porcine POAO, some of which appear to be home-slaughtered and arrive in Great Britain from an undisclosed origin as a non-commercial import, with poor levels of biosecurity and food hygiene. Therefore, the risk of ASF entering Great Britain, from the human-mediated pathway and moving non-commercial porcine POAO, is considered to remain at HIGH (occurs very often).

Pig keepers and veterinarians should remind themselves of the clinical signs for ASF. Any suspect cases must be reported promptly. Please see [African swine fever: how to spot and report the disease - GOV.UK](#) for more information.

We will continue to monitor the situation.

Authors

Megan Arter-Hazzard

Dr Lauren Perrin

Dr Erica Kintz

Dr Sonny Bacigalupo

Dominika Serwin

References

WOAH [WAHIS](#)

Government of Catalonia, 2025a [The Government confirms two positive cases of weight... - Govern.cat](#)

Pittiglio, C., Khomenko, S., & Beltran-Alcrudo, D. (2018). Wild boar mapping using population-density statistics: From polygons to high resolution raster maps. *PLOS ONE*, 13(5), e0193295. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0193295>

Empres-i, 2025 [Empres-i +](#)

MAPA, 2025 [African Swine Fever](#)

MAPA, 2024 [plannacionaldecontroldejabalieses.pdf](#)

AHDB, 2025 [EU pork market: Production and exports increase in H1 2025 | AHDB](#)

Canadian Food Inspection Agency, 2019 [African Swine Fever Forum 2019 – Backgrounder Document - inspection.canada.ca](#)

Pietschmann, J., Mur, L., Blome, S. *et al.* African swine fever virus transmission cycles in Central Europe: Evaluation of wild boar-soft tick contacts through detection of antibodies against *Ornithodoros erraticus* saliva antigen. *BMC Vet Res* 12, 1 (2016). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12917-015-0629-9>

Boinas, F. S., Wilson, A. J., Hutchings, G. H., Martins, C., & Dixon, L. J. (2011). *The persistence of African swine fever virus in field-infected Ornithodoros erraticus during the ASF endemic period in Portugal.* PLoS ONE, 6(5), e20383. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0020383>

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, 2023 [Ornithodoros erraticus - current known distribution: October 2023](#)

Folly, A. J., Dorey-Robinson, D., Hernández-Triana, L. M., Phipps, L. P., & Johnson, N. (2020). Emerging threats to animals in the United Kingdom by arthropod-borne diseases. *Frontiers in Veterinary Science*, 7, 20. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fvets.2020.00020>

Rubio-Ramon G. Animals that feed nations and nations that feed animals: industrially farmed pigs as nation-building resources in Catalonia. *Geoforum*. 2025;162:104291. doi:10.1016/j.geoforum.2025.104291

Catalan news (2024) [Barcelona installs fences around bins to keep wild boars away](#)

Catalan news (2025) [Wild boar attacks in Barcelona down 70% in last two years](#)

Government of Catalonia, 2025b [El Govern reforça la vigilància a la zona on... - Govern.cat](#)