



alert



FAO ALERT COUNTRIES TO ENHANCE PREPAREDNESS FOR AFRICAN SWINE FEVER

23 December 2022

Key facts:

- African swine fever (ASF)** is a fatal viral disease of domestic and wild pigs of all ages. Although is not a threat to human health, ASF has severe impacts on food security, livelihoods, national and international markets. There is no effective vaccine nor treatment against it.
- Clinical Signs:** although suggestive and important, are not specific. Usually animal owners first observe: lack of appetite and hind limb weakness and ataxia, sudden death. Large amounts of the virus are shed for 24-48 hours before clinical signs develop and during the acute stage of infection. The incubation period varies 4-15 days.
- Laboratory differential diagnosis is essential.** Classical Swine Fever (CSF), Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS) and Porcine Dermatitis Nephropathy Syndrome (PDNS), erysipelas, salmonellosis, and pasteurellosis can show overlapping clinical signs and pathological lesions
- Laboratory diagnosis.** Elective tissues for diagnostic tests are: tonsil and lymph nodes, kidney and lungs; in old carcasses the marrow of long bones can retain the virus for long period so it is the elective tissue for laboratory tests.

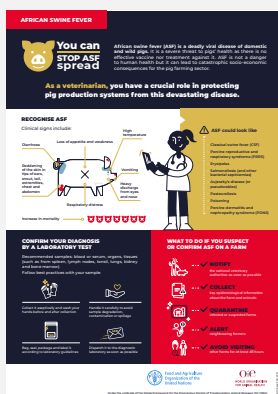
African swine fever (ASF) outbreaks continue to be reported in Africa, Europe, Asia and Pacific and Hispaniola Island in Americas. In 2022 (by 9 December), 4 680 cases were officially notified to the WOA: 3 999 from Europe, 799 from Asia, Africa 57 and America 7. Most cases in domestic pigs were reported in Asia and most cases in wild boar were reported in Europe.

Figure 1. ASF notifications in domestic and wild pigs, environmental samples (January – 9 December 2022)

Region	Domestic	Wild	Environmental samples	Cases (Total)
Asia	723	75	1	799
Europe	400	3.599	0	3.999
Africa	57	0	0	57
America	7	0	0	7
TOTAL	1.187	3.674	0	4.861

Source: FAO. 2022. EMPRES-i in: FAO. Rome. Cited 12 December 2022. <https://empres-i.apps.fao.org/>

Available evidence indicates that the movement of infected pigs and uncooked infected pig products are the main routes of the introduction of the virus in most countries. The exception is the several countries in Europe and the Republic of Korea where infected wild boar is the most important source of infection for domestic pigs. Given the fact that the ASF virus is endemic in domestic pigs in many parts of the world, while present, it may go undetected in animals slaughtered for human consumption. Raw or undercooked pork or food waste containing pig meat are major sources and modes of virus introduction that can lead to ASF outbreaks. The risk of ASF for countries or parts of countries free from the disease has increased due to the intensified movement and trade of livestock and animal products. Illegal or uncontrolled imports of pig meat products, either accidentally by tourists, migrant workers, students or hunters returning from endemic countries or intentionally through smuggling meat products for personal or commercial use, presents a continuous threat.



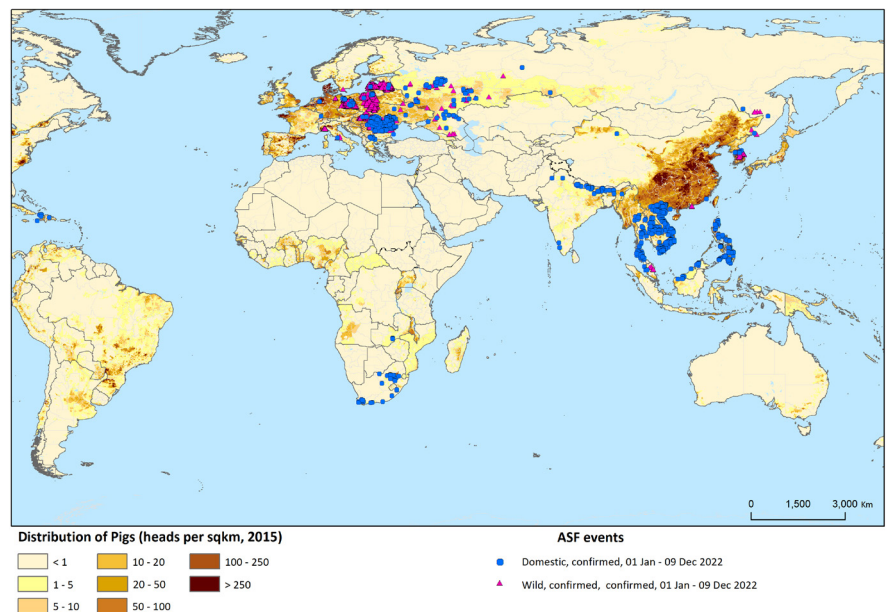
Useful Links

- ▶ African swine fever detection and diagnosis. A manual for veterinarians (FAO Manual 2017)
www.fao.org/3/i7228e/i7228e.pdf
- ▶ Preparation of African swine fever contingency plans (FAO Manual 2009)
www.fao.org/3/i1196e/i1196E.pdf
- ▶ African swine fever in wild boar - Ecology and biosecurity (EC, FAO and WOH 2022)
www.fao.org/3/cc0785en/cc0785en.pdf
- ▶ Addressing African Swine Fever: Laboratory protocols and algorithms" in collaboration with ACDP (FAO 2020)
www.fao.org/3/cb1430en/cb1430en.pdf
- ▶ Carcass management guidelines. Effective disposal of animal carcasses and contaminated materials on small to medium-sized farms (FAO Guidelines 2020)
www.fao.org/3/cb2464en/CB2464EN.pdf
- ▶ Joint ASF communication campaign (WOAH and FAO 2020)
<https://trello.com/b/GloiZoik/african-swine-fever-woah-fao>

This risk will increase during the forthcoming holiday season considering that:

- millions of people are expected to travel for the Christmas (25 December) and New Year (1 January 2023) and Lunar New Year holiday season (starting on 22 January 2023);
- while the vast majority of traffic will be within countries, the movement of people who could be carrying infected meat between countries will also occur;
- travel increases the risk of spreading ASF, since the virus can be transmitted via infected raw pork and pork products, contact with infected animals as well as contaminated clothing, vehicles and other equipment; and the demand for pork will likely increase during this period, increasing the likelihood of infected pigs being sold.

Figure 2. Confirmed ASF outbreaks in domestic and wild pigs (January – December 2022)

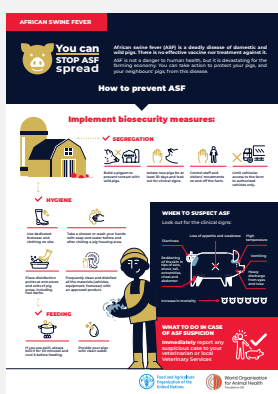


Source: United Nations Geospatial. 2020. Map of the World. United Nations. Cited 22 August 2022. www.un.org/geospatial/file/3420/download?token=TUP4yDmF modified with GLW4 data and data from the EMPRES-i, 9 December 2022.

Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on these map(s) do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of FAO concerning the legal status of any country.

FAO RECOMMENDATIONS

- Countries should assess pathways that have resulted in the introduction and spread of ASF in the recent past to plan interventions to minimize the introduction and spread of the virus.
- Inspections at international borders, within national administrative borders and on traffic routes based on risk analysis, should be enhanced to minimize the risk of the introduction of potentially infected pork products. Furthermore, intensive border/customs control of passengers' luggage is recommended, as well as parcels at international post offices.
- Public awareness must be improved, while penalties for non-compliance should be increased.



Contacts

FAO Emergency Prevention System for
Animal Health (EMPRES)

EMPRES-Animal-Health@fao.org

- Farmers and communities should be advised of the increased threat of ASF and the need to tighten prevention measures on farms. All pigs should be housed. No visitors should be allowed to enter pig pens. The introduction of pigs from unknown sources should be avoided. Feeding of food scraps that might contain pork should either be temporarily stopped or, as a minimum, steps should be taken to ensure food scraps that might contain pork are boiled vigorously.
- Steps to enhance early detection must be taken so that appropriate prevention and control measures can be implemented. In places where compensation for culled pigs is not available, authorities should continue efforts to obtain funding for it.
- Monitoring and early warning systems must be implemented based on reports of increased pig mortalities, observations at slaughterhouses or panic sales, using information from farmers, traders, paravets, inspectors and relevant social media sites.
- Awareness campaigns should be reinforced. Countries are encouraged to use communication products developed by FAO and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH, founded as OIE) . These products are available in Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

Through its Animal Production and Health Division and technical cooperation operations with institutional partners, FAO remains **fully committed to assist and support** Member Nations to enhance their preparedness and emergency management capabilities.