

African Swine Fever in Europe

29 September 2023, Brussels



The role of hunters

- Hunters are the eyes and ears of the countryside.
- Deep understanding of wildlife management.
- Often the first to find evidence of AH issues in the wild:
 - Providing samples of carcasses
 - Assisting in managing diseases, surveying, information exchange
- Hunting of wild boar.
- Biosecurity awareness: essential for containing ASF.



Standing Group of Experts on African swine fever in Europe under the GF-TADs umbrella



Handbook on African Swine Fever in wild boar and biosecurity during hunting

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Views of experts – no simple solution

Conference in 2018 at European Parliament "The Threat of African Swine Fever in Europe: The Key Role of Hunters"

- **Dr. Sandra Blome**, Deputy Director of the Institute of Diagnostic Virology, Friedrich Loeffler Institute in Germany. "**there is no one measure you can take that will work in all occasions**. We should rather speak about a **toolbox full of measures** that depending on the specific circumstances might work in one case but not in another. Hunters should furthermore intensify the surveillance in risk zones."
- Mr. Mārtiņš Seržants of the Latvian State Veterinary and Food Service. Need for more knowledge on wild boar population biology... "hunters are an indispensable partner to understand behaviour of ASF in the wild boar population".

Wild boar hunting yield predicted at 10x10km

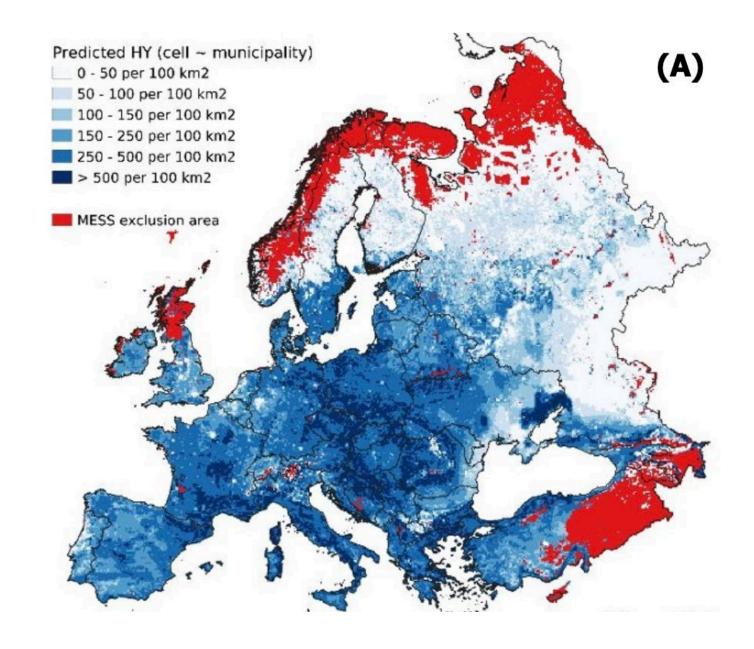
EXTERNAL SCIENTIFIC REPORT



APPROVED: 09 August 2021 doi:10.2903/sp.efsa.2021.EN-6825

Update of model for wild boar abundance based on hunting yield and first models based on occurrence for wild ruminants at European scale

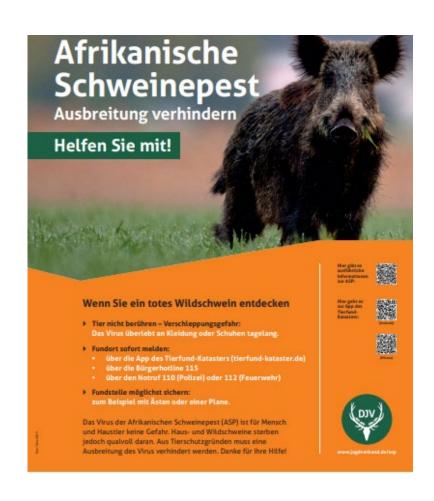
ENETWILD-consortium¹, Sonia Illanas, Simon Croft, Graham C. Smith, Javier Fernández-López, Joaquín Vicente, Jose Antonio Blanco-Aguiar, Roberto Pascual-Rico, Massimo Scandura, Marco Apollonio, Ezio Ferroglio, Oliver Keuling, Stefania Zanet, Francesca Brivio, Tomasz Podgorski, Kamila Plis, Ramon C. Soriguer, Pelayo Acevedo





Involving hunters

- Cooperation;
- Understanding viewpoints;
- Effective awareness-raising;
- Good communication and collaboration;
- Legislation (including contingency plans);
 - Making management easier (including use of modern equipment)
- Motivation (including financial for activities carried out by hunters);
- Regular training (e.g. biosecurity courses).
- <u>www.face.eu/animal-welfare/african-swine-fever/</u>



Jagdverband

Veterinäramt



CONTROL OF AFRICAN SWINE FEVER IN THE EU The key role of hunters

African swine fever (ASF) is a devastating, usually deadly, infectious disease of pigs and wild boar for which no vaccine exists.

The consequences of the disease affect:

1. Farms and the economy:

- · the virus kills animals.
- economic losses for EU farmers are aggravated by disruption of international trade of animals and meat.
- · economic losses for the hunters.

2. Wildlife and hunting:

- because of the disease wild boar populations can decrease significantly or even disappear.
- hunting may be restricted or even banned in some infected areas (including collection of carcasses and trophies).

The pig sector is one of the most economically significant farming sectors in the FU

It represents **8.5% of the total output** of the EU agricultural industry, the highest when compared to other meat sectors.

Pigmeat accounts for 50% of total EU meat production.

Pigmeat is the most exported of all meat produced in the EU: it represents 62% of EU total meat exports.

Hunters can make the difference - for better or worse - as they may increase or reduce the spread of the disease.



Disease transmission and spread

Transmission can happen through direct contact of healthy pigs or wild boar with infected (dead or sick) pigs or wild boar. However, humans and especially hunters - while not being affected by the disease - can help spreading it by:

- Any contact with infected animals and dead bodies (carcasses).
- Contact with anything contaminated by the virus (e.g. clothing, vehicles, other equipment).
- Feeding the animals with meat or meat products from infected animals (e.g. sausages or uncooked meat) or garbage containing infected meat (e.g. kitchen waste, swill feed, including offal).

Hunters have a key role to play

The EU and national authorities in the affected countries are taking wide range of measures to control and eradicate the disease, but better **cooperation with hunters (and their associations)** and **with farmers (and their associations)** is vital. Hunters monitor the health status of wild animals and play a key role in protecting animal health, including that of domestic animals.

If you see unusual wild boar behaviour or, most likely, if you find a dead animal, you should consider the possibility that it has been infected by African swine fever (especially in the <u>infected areas or areas</u> at risk).

During your hunting trips, especially to the areas considered at risk, you should:

- Collaborate with the competent authority in the finding and reporting of wild boar carcasses.
- Clean and disinfect your equipment, clothes, vehicle and trophies on site and always before leaving the area.
- Eviscerate shot wild boar in the designated dressing area of the hunting ground.
- Contribute to the gradual reduction of the wild boar density in the areas not yet affected by the disease, including targeted hunting of adult and sub-adult females.
- Do not feed wild boar throughout the whole year.

Which are the areas at risk and which EU countries are affected?





*Animal Disease Notification System (ADNS) https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/not-system_en

What are the EU and Member States' competent authorities doing?

The EU has developed an African Swine Fever Strategy and a solid legislative framework to help control and eradicate ASF, including specific regionalisation measures which are focused on control measures and prevention of the spread of the disease (in order to protect disease free areas in the EU) requiring hunters' cooperation among other things. This is based on science as provided by European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

The EU budget for the prevention and eradication of the disease equals €48.2 million for the period 2013-2018. The EU ensures the coordination work with the Member States and is working with the Eastern neighbours.



For more information:

https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/control-measures/asf_en#description.

More about ASF: http://asf-referencelab.info/asf/en/the-disease

@Food_EU





Specific provisions provided by national competent authority should be checked.

Hunters are key players in wild boar management!

- Active surveillance: hunting wild boar for testing for ASF in selected areas
- Passive surveillance: finding wild boar carcasses for testing & destruction
- Targeted hunting of females: in selected areas
- Awareness to prevent spreading the disease





WHAT DOES LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT OF WILD BOAR POPULATIONS ENTAIL?

- ► Intensive hunting and not feeding wild boar are essential to reduce the risks of outbreaks in free areas.
- ► Specific measures and joint programmes of cooperation between the agriculture and environmental sectors (hunting management, ban of supplementary feeding, agricultural practises) are tailored to the particular situation of each Member State.

https://food.ec.europa.eu/document/download/562e4071-2415-40c7-af00-c848ee1ab7bc_en?filename=ad_control-measures_asf_factsheet_202206.pdf



Latest developments at EU level - 2023

- Implementing Regulation 2021/605 laying down special control measures for African swine fever was replaced in April 2023 by Implementing Regulation 2023/594
- Now national action plans for wild boar have been made compulsory.
- This was expected as the Commission had made it clear that the poor uptake of national action plans by Member States obliged the Commission to intervene and make them legally binding



FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATIONS FOR HUNTING AND CONSERVATION OF THE EU

- Article 56 / ANNEX IV MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR NATIONAL ACTION PLANS...
- (e) estimates of the **size of the population** of wild porcine animals within the Member State or regions thereof and a description of the estimation method;
- (f) a description of hunting management within the Member State, including an overview of the hunting grounds, hunting associations, hunting seasons, specific hunting methods and tools;
- (g) a description of qualitative and / or quantitative annual, intermediate and long-term targets and the means for an appropriate control and, if necessary, reduction of the population of wild porcine animals, including targets for annual hunting bags, where relevant;
- (h) a description or links to national biosecurity requirements related to the hunting of wild porcine animals;
- (k) a **communication strategy for hunters**, a description of targeted awareness and training campaigns concerning African swine fever and related links to such campaigns for hunters to prevent the introduction and dissemination of that disease by hunters;
- (I) joint programmes of cooperation between the agriculture and environmental sectors ensuring sustainable hunting management, an implementation of a ban on supplementary feeding and agricultural practices aimed at facilitating the prevention, control and eradication of African swine fever, where relevant;



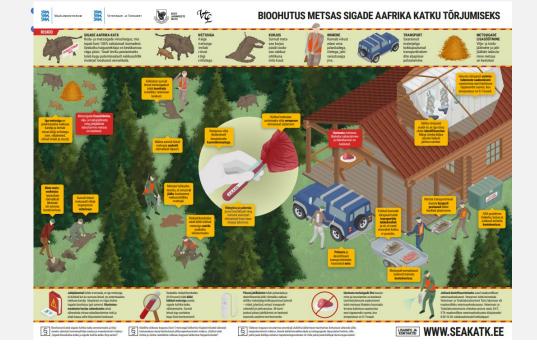
• Article 58

Special trainings obligations of the Member States concerned

The Member States concerned shall organise and carry out regularly or at appropriate intervals specific trainings concerning the risks of African swine fever and possible prevention, control and eradication measures for at least the following targeted groups:

- (a) veterinarians;
- (b) farmers keeping porcine animals and other relevant operators and transporters;
- (c) hunters.















Never approach a dead or sick wild boar, keep your distance and report it to local authorities as soon as possible.



Do not leave wild boar offal or waste in forests or fields.





Example of communications by regional hunting federations in France on outbreaks close by in Italy





Actualité du 17 mars 2022

Peste Porcine Africaine en Italie : les FDC frontalièr nobilisées!

epuis l'annonce de la découverte des premiers cas de sangliers infectés par le virus d fricaine (PPA) en Italie le 5 janvier dernier, les trois fédérations départementales des C ontalières (Hautes-Alpes, Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, Alpes-Maritimes) en lien avec la égionale des Chasseurs PACA et la Fédération Nationale des Chasseurs, ont répondu I lemandes de l'Etat. En effet, elles ont :

BIOSECURITE LES CHASSEURS TOUS CONCERNÉS!

Tout chasseur joue un rôle primordial dans le contrôle des maladies communes aux animaux domestiques et aux animaux sauvages.









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et mon matériel à l'eau savonneuse.





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dans un élevage dans les 48h

après la chasse

En aucun cas, mon matériel de chasse et mon

éhicule ne datvent être Introdutt dans un élevage



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de nettayage (type lave-batte),



Je contacte sans délat mon interlocuteur SAGIR st l'observe des mortalités ou des comportements anormaux.







- Many different authorities on different levels are involved, sometimes more support from higher levels to the competent authorities in the field is required.
- Support for hunter's efforts in prevention of ASF by reducing the wild boar population.
- The role of hunters, of primary importance in the active search for carcasses and, in general, for the early detection of ASF, should be better recognized.



 The main challenge is to resolve the lack of a coordinated strategy between regions and central authorities in order to reduce the risk of ASF spread. As an example, there is not a coordinated activity to collect carcasses and reduce wild boar population density in infected areas.



- Hunters are directly involved in stopping ASF and they require full support. They are not the cause, but are on the main battleground.
 More funds are needed for educating wider society.
- Try to focus on other resources/risks. There's many ways to spread ASF but the state trys to control only wild boars and hunting.



- Convincing people to carry out biosecurity on farms and controlling compliance with these rules;
- Large-scale corn cultivations (every year, getting bigger each year);
- Too few cold storage facilities to store wild boar;
- Costs of disposal of wild boar carcasses (~120 euro per carcass);
- Problem with bringing healthy wild boars (zone II and III) to market + purchase points do not want to accept carcasses;
- Need for money for cold storage facilities, biosecurity, wild boar carcass disposal.



National Action Plans for wild boar in order to avoid the spread of African swine fever

Main message – Hunters' organisations need to be involved in the development of national action plans



What's needed:

- We need more support from our governments and EU in the form of disinfectants and other materials, financing the purchase and building of pits for disposal of animal products, refrigerators, transport trailers, etc.
- Need for money for cold storage facilities, biosecurity, wild boar carcass disposal etc.
- Try to focusing to other resources and control of spreading of diseases.

FACE work on ASF in wild boar:

- Technical knowledge base:
- Management
 - Biosecurity
 - Monitoring
- Communication:
- With members
 - Public
 - Other relevant Stakeholders:
 - Sharing best practices
 - Engagement in policy discussions



HOME

WHO WE ARE

WHAT WE DO

TRECOMMENDATIONS TO HUNTING ASSOCIATIONS

Please find the Recommendations to hunting associations and hunters before and after an outbreak. We provide to you the recommendations in [EN - DE - FR]

TRECOMMENDATIONS TO HUNTERS

Here you can find the specific recommendations made for you to uphold before and after an outbreak of ASF. As we want to reach out to as many of you as possible, we asked our Member associations to translate these recommendations and to provide us with a copy of them. Seen the variety of countries and the need for diversification, every association might slightly adapt their recommendations to suit the local situation. This is why we offer you the recommendations in your national language using the logo of the Member association of your country.

https://www.face.eu/animal-welfare/african-swine-fever/recommendations/





Thank you very much for your attention

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