



ASF Expert Mission to Czech Republic

EU VET Initiative

10 - 12 May 2023

Background



On 28.4. a sick wild boar was shot near the city of Mimon. It was the 15th positive ASF case in CZ.

The site is located outside the restricted area, about 40 km south of the border region with Poland, where the other ASF-positive cases have been detected so far.

ASF in the Czech Republic – current situation



1. Jindřichovice pod Smrkem, confirmed 1.12.2022, found dead
2. Ludvíkov pod Smrkem, confirmed 5.1.2023, found dead
3. Nové Město pod Smrkem, confirmed 5.1.2023, found dead
4. Horní Řasnice, confirmed 10.2.2023, found dead
5. Ludvíkov pod Smrkem, confirmed 21.2.2023, found dead
6. **Ludvíkov pod Smrkem, confirmed 10.3.2023, hunted**
7. Horní Řasnice, confirmed 10.3.2023, found dead
8. Horní Řasnice, confirmed 24.3.2023, found dead
9. Horní Řasnice, confirmed 24.3.2023, found dead
10. Horní Řasnice, confirmed 30.3.2023, found dead
11. Černousy, confirmed 25.4.2023, found dead
12. Předlánce, confirmed 27.4.2023, found dead
13. Dolní Řasnice, confirmed 3.5.2023, found dead
14. Horní Pertoltice, confirmed 3.5.2023, found dead
15. **Hradčany nad Ploučnicí, confirmed 3.5.2023, hunted (demarcation of the infected zone)**



All cases were found not further than 3 km from the Polish border. A spreading tendency of ASF towards the south has not been observed so far.



ToR

Providing on-the-spot assistance

- most suitable ASF eradication measures
- scientific, technical, managerial aspects
- preparedness and surveillance in wild boar
- preparedness and surveillance in domestic pigs

Experts: Tsviatko Alexandrov (BG), Klaus Depner (DE)

Places visited during the mission:

1

Liberec, District
Veterinary Office

2

Border with Poland
where infected wild
boars were found last
6 months

3

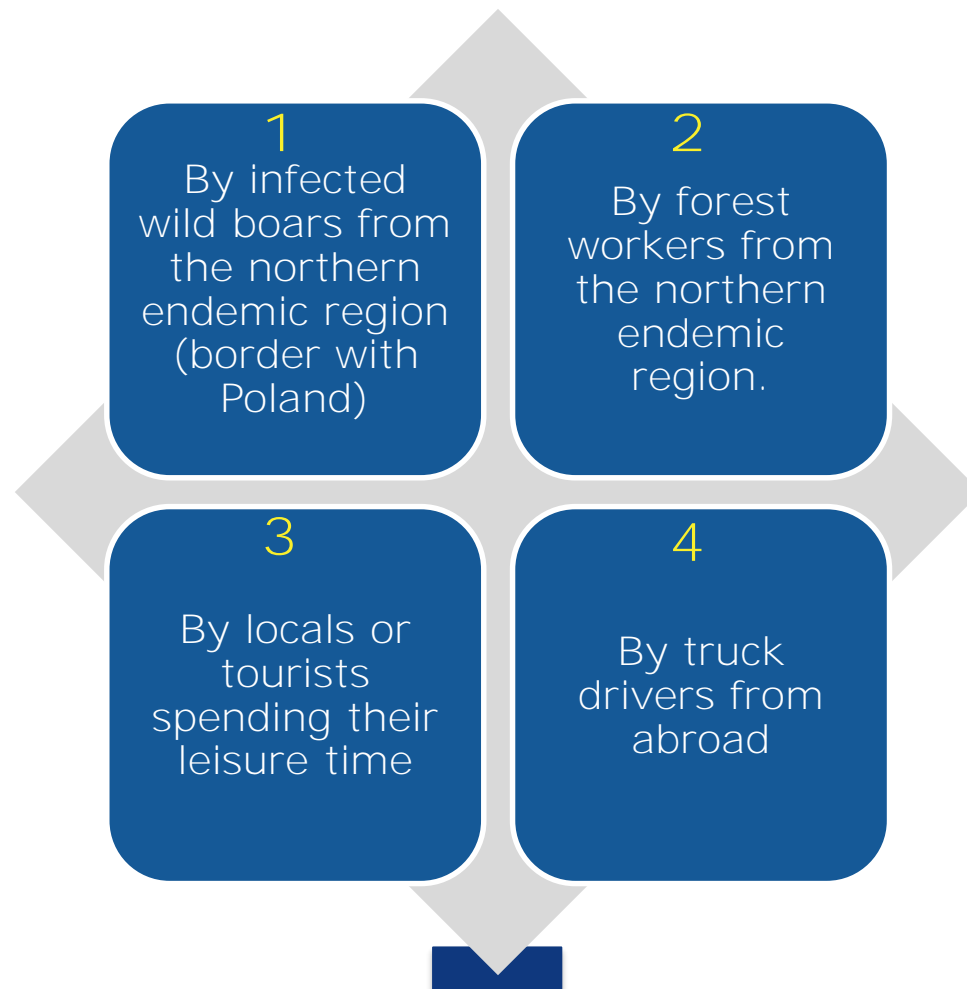
Places where the ASF
positive wild boar was
hunted (near Mimon)



Concrete questions

- Where did the virus come from and how? Is there a connection to the epidemic area at the border with Poland?
- When did the virus entered the Mimon area, i.e. how long was the high risk period (HRP)?
- What are the most immediate and urgent measures that need to be taken to get more clarity on the epidemiological situation?

Four hypotheses about virus introduction have been discussed:





Virus origin

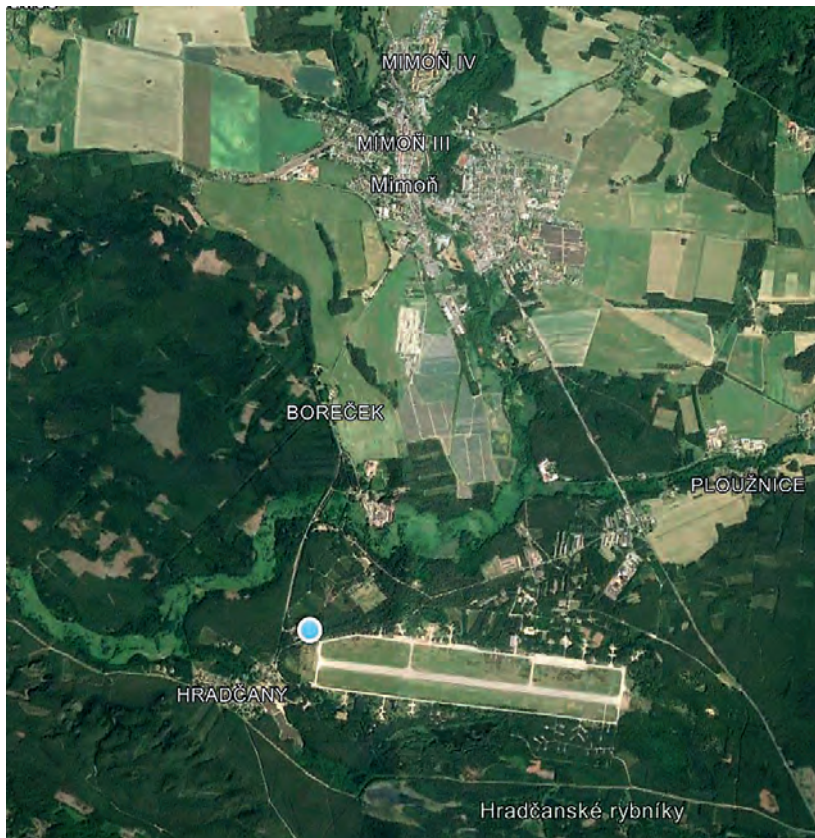
(Where did the virus come from and how?)

Hypotheses
1 and 2
could be
ruled out

- No evidence that infected wild boars from the north might have brought the virus to the Mimon area (natural and artificial barriers between the two areas)
- No evidence of forestry workers or equipment from the endemic areas working or being used in the Mimon area.

Hypotheses 3 and 4 could not be ruled out

Virus origin (Where did the virus come from and how?)



The site where the ASF positive wild boar was hunted is a former military airport which is no longer used for military purposes (20.000 ha)

It is a very popular peri-urban, park-like recreation area where people (locals and tourists) come on nice days to picnic, or to use the runway for cycling, skating or jogging

Long-distance lorry drivers also use the site for a break. It seems to be an unofficial resting area for truckers

High risk period

On 28 April the sick wild boar was shot by a ranger. *(Two days before it was seen as conspicuous.)*

The laboratory results proved that the animal was PCR positive but seronegative.

Thus, it can be concluded that the animal was not infected for more than 10 days.

Most probably it became infected in the period 19-23 April.

On a side note, during this time period the weather was nice and many people were outdoors.

High risk period

Two
questions
arise:

- Did the wild boar pick up the disease from another infected animal (or carcass)?
- Did it pick up ASFV by consuming contaminated material, e.g. carelessly disposed waste containing ASF virus?

If from another animal, then one must assume that there are other infected animals in the area. The epidemic could therefore already be a few weeks old (>10 days) and may have spread

If via contaminated feed, it could be a focal event that has not yet spread widely

This uncertainty can only be clarified through an intensive carcass search.

Main conclusions and recommendations

The newly infected area is most likely not connected to the older infected area in the north.

Most likely, the virus has been carelessly introduced either by tourists or long-distance traffic.

The findings indicate a focal event with a relatively short HRP.

An intensive carcass search will clarify how large the infected area will be and where its centre is.

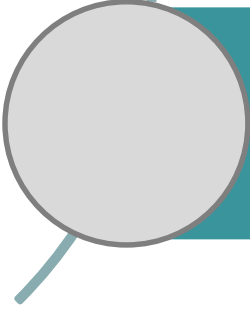
Once the infected area will be identified, size and control measures will have to be adapted accordingly.

A new critical evaluation of the epidemiological situation end of May, after an intensive carcass search, is recommended.

Main conclusions and recommendations



The game collection centres in the infected areas should be managed and supervised by the local veterinary authorities and adequate facilities (cooling capacities) should be provided and installed



Passive surveillance should be prioritized also in the domestic pig sector (*each week PCR testing of the first two dead pigs per epidemiological unit*)



The EU-VET team would like to thank all Czech colleagues for their support and help

The working atmosphere during the mission was very good. The colleagues gave us all their support and help to make the mission fruitful