

HIGH-LEVEL MINISTERIAL MEETING ON AFRICAN SWINE FEVER
27 september 2022, Brussels

African Swine Fever in Belgium : Story of a successful eradication



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Agenda

- I Belgian context & preparedness

- II Outbreak ASF in wild boar & European regionalisation

- III Measures ASF in wild boar and domestic pigs

- IV Eradication of ASF in Belgium : free status EU + OIE

- V Post-crisis measures in wild boar and domestic pigs

- VI Awareness raising

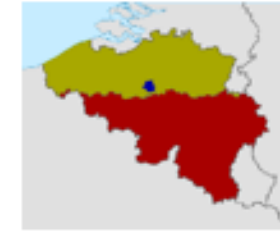


I. Belgian context & preparedness

Competences in Belgium

Federal level : Food safety, Domestic animal health, ...

Regional level : Wild animal health/management, hunting, tourism, ...



Before the outbreak : **strong network & preparation between ASF (potential) partners =>** taskforce ASF, working group Wildlife, crisis managers, etc. => **RAPID DETECTION = RAPID RESPONSE**



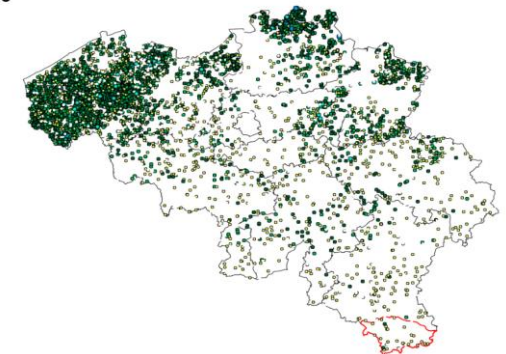
Belgian domestic pig sector

Distribution of the domestic pig sector and the wild boar population

Domestic pigs = mostly fattening farms with most of the farms situated in the north and northwest of Belgium

Wild boar = highest distribution in the southern region of Belgium

25/9/2018



number of pigs / farm
● = 10 000
● = 5 001 to 10 000
● = 1 001 to 5 000
● = 501 to 1 000
● = 1 to 500
● = 1 to 100



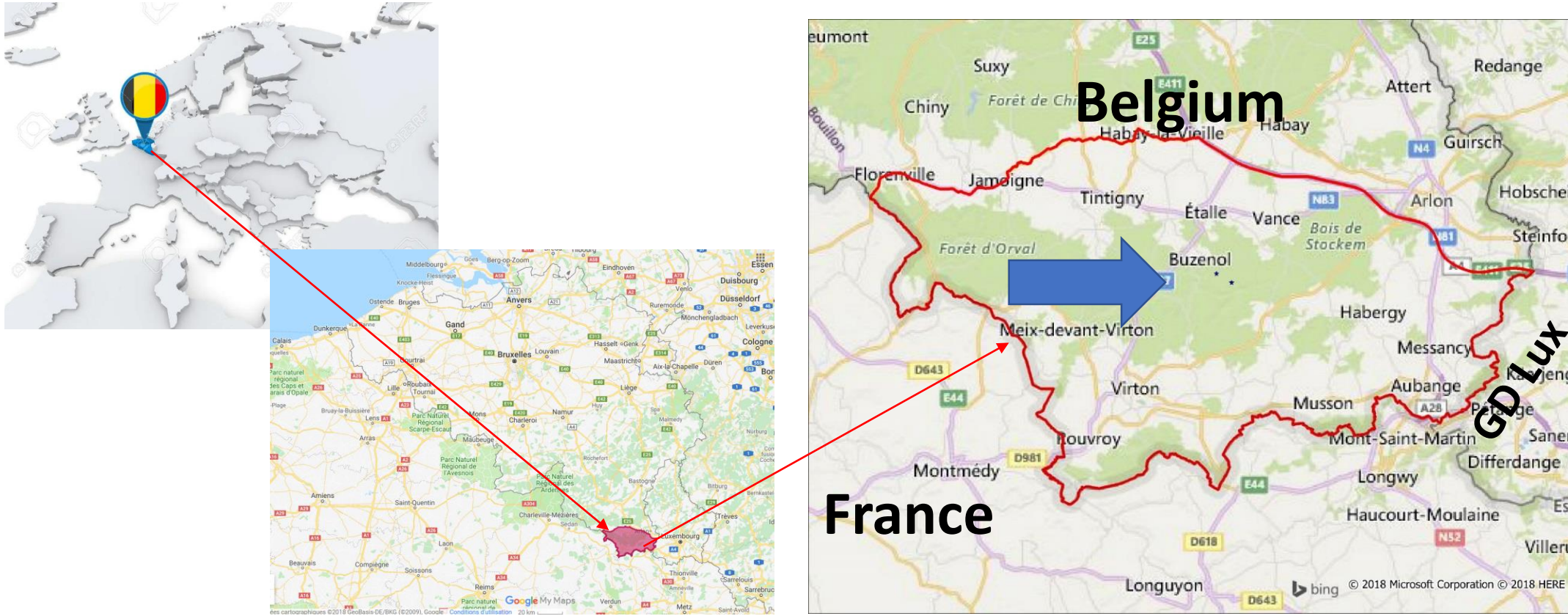
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II. Outbreak ASF in wild boar & European regionalisation

First outbreak

Confirmation ASF in wild boar in Belgium on 13 September 2018

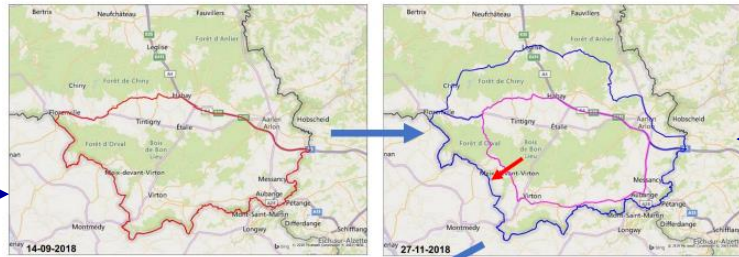


“provisional infected” zone (63.000 ha)



II. Outbreak ASF in wild boar & European regionalisation

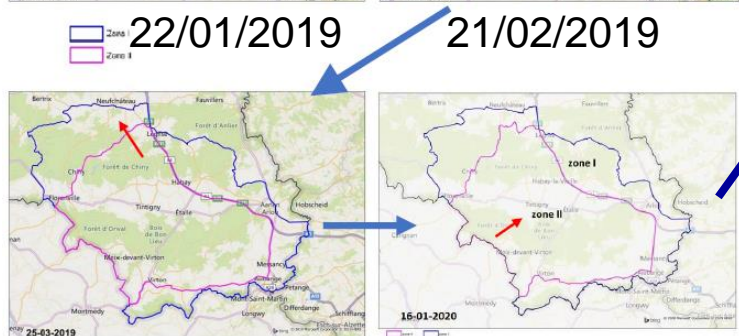
First provisional infected zone
14/09/2018



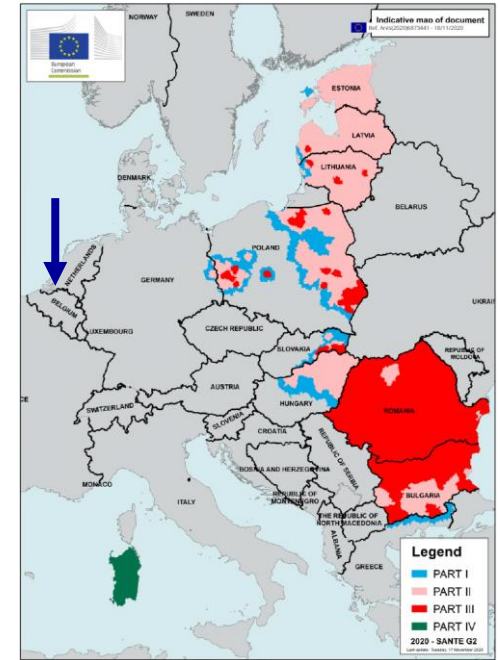
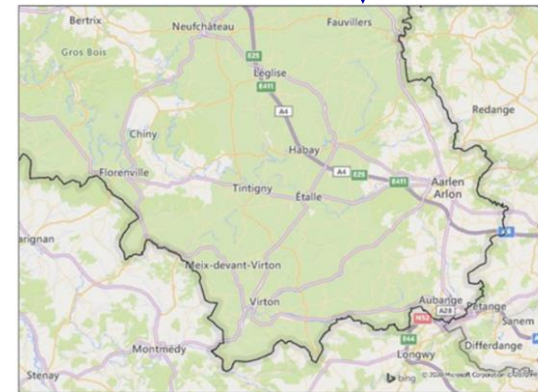
Then Zone II and I
27/11/2018



Changes in zoning - EU



23-11-2020
EU zoning lifted!



III. Measures ASF in wild boar and domestic pigs

In wild boar



- 1) A standstill of activities in the infected forest (hunting, forestry work and tourism),
- 2) An intensive search for dead wild boar – the removal of the carcasses found out of the forest – sampling – analysis by the national reference lab



- 3) Quick and drastic depopulation in the area surrounding the infected zone & later in the infected zone



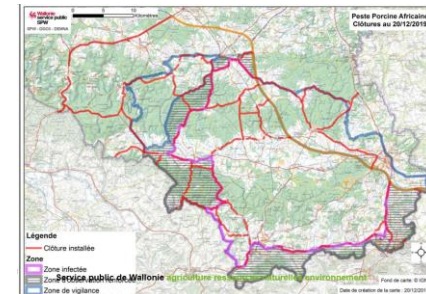
Piège INBO démontable 3x3



Piège coral



- 4) Containment of the virus by a network of wild boar-proof fences (300 km)



III. Measures ASF in wild boar and domestic pigs



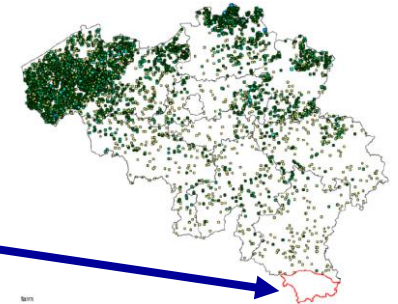
Domestic pigs

No cases in domestic pigs

April 2019 : renewal of the 2007 declaration to WOAHO/OIE for ASF-free status for domestic pigs/swine

1) Preventive measures already in place before the crisis (infrastructural and operational requirements)

2) 27/09 – 03/10/2018 : Preventive culling of all the domestic pigs within the provisional Infected Zone => Eliminate the risk of introducing ASF to pig farms !
Ban on repopulation + compensation of the pig farmers



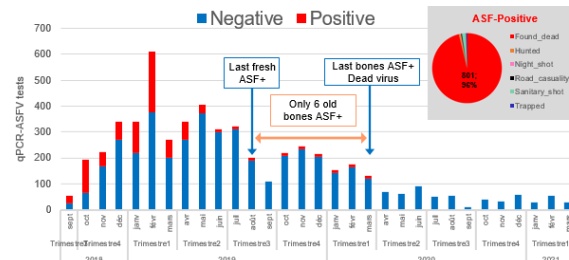
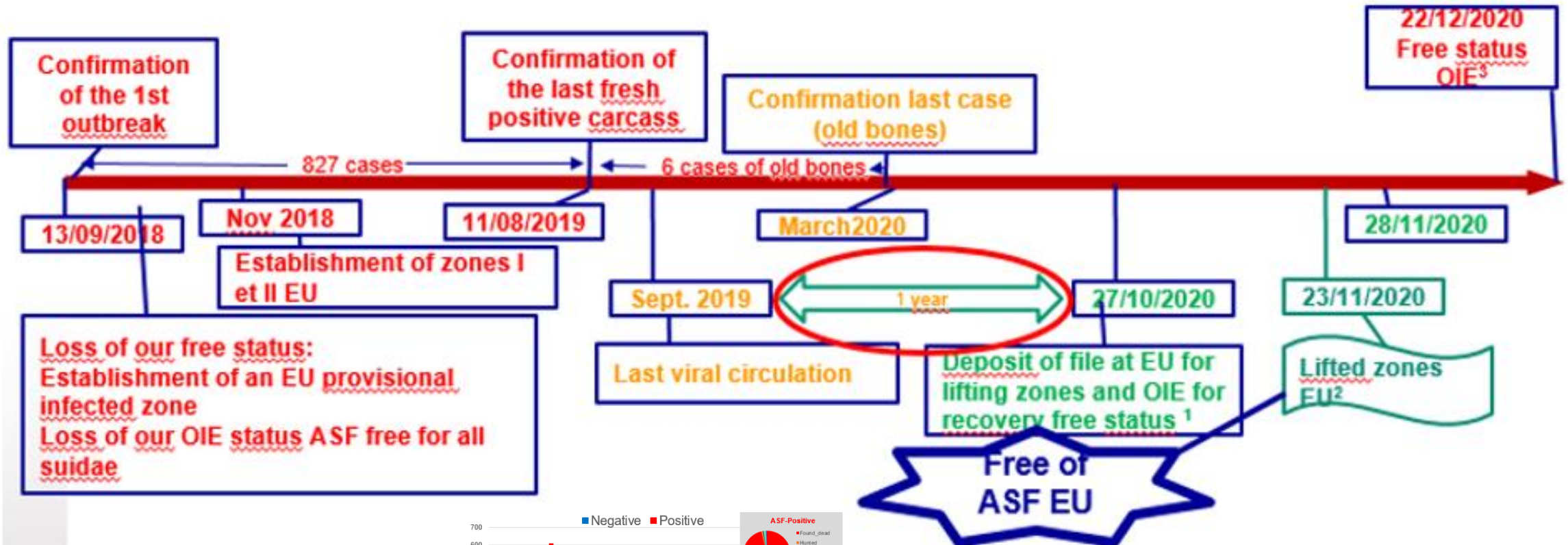
3) New structural measures among which enhanced passive surveillance on pig farms in the whole of Belgium such as enhanced passive surveillance

4) Since the 1st of June 2021 mandatory yearly evaluation of the biosecurity measures applied on the pig farms + New App



IV. Eradication of ASF in Belgium : free status EU + OIE

Recovery of our free status



V. Post-crisis measures in wild boar and domestic pigs

Exit strategy

In wild boar

- fence network maintained & sustain 5 years from 2022 except where there is a problem (decision changed 180° compared to initial decision given the increase in general risk)
- reduction of wild boar population
- (enhanced) passive + active surveillance
- awareness campaigns for hunters, forestry workers etc.



In domestic pigs

- restocking of pig farms is possible again since 25th of January 2021
- enhanced passive surveillance in pig farms is maintained !
- in addition : active surveillance in “farms which could be at risk”
- awareness campaigns for pig farmers, veterinarians etc.
- enforced biosecurity measures in place since the 1st of June 2021



VI. Awareness raising



Awareness raising of **all actors** is required -> **veterinarians, pig famers, hunters but also truck drivers, the general public and the travellers**

Also waste management for rest areas (along traffic axes) is necessary.

Awareness raising through :

- Meetings (such as the taskforce ASF)
- Newsletters destined to veterinarians and pig farmers
- Brochures destined to all actors and in different languages !

The disease

African swine fever (ASF) is a very contagious viral disease that affects pigs and wild boars. There are no specific symptoms that occur with ASF. Every unusual death must be considered a possible case of ASF.

The disease can occur in three forms:

an acute form:

- heavy fever, anorexia, diarrhoea,
- lethargy, a **tendency to gather close together**
- blood disorders that are accompanied by **subcutaneous haemorrhages and jaundice**
- a quick death (2 to 3 weeks) and a **mortality rate** that comes close to 100%.

a subacute form: less intense symptoms, a lower mortality rate with deadly consequences over a longer term.

a chronic form: diffuse symptoms that point to a disease developing over the course of several months, such as

- **abortions**, shorter pregnancies, growth retardation in piglets
- **little weight gain** when fattening up the animals

Most common ways of transmission

ASF can be transmitted through:

- **contact with infected pigs or wild boars (including carcasses or offal)**
- **meat/meat products** from infected animals
- **contaminated objects** such as shoes, clothing, vehicles, equipment
- **people** who have come into contact with infected animals or who have recently visited ASF-affected areas.

The virus remains contagious for a long time on **cadavers of animals, in the environment and in meat/meat products** of infected animals (up to 105 days in the offal and blood and up to 300 days in dried meat!).

ASF is not transmissible to humans, so there is no public health risk.

3 ways to stop ASF

Prevention

There is no vaccine (yet) for ASF. The only way to prevent the introduction of this disease on a farm is to implement the following hygiene and **biosecurity measures**:

- use a hygiene barrier, have a pest control programme
- apply the hygiene measures for every person who enters the farm
- put new pigs in quarantine
- do not feed the pigs kitchen waste
- prevent contact between the pigs and wild boars
- deny access to the farm to every person, every vehicle and all equipment that has been in contact with wild boars or that has been in a risk area in the previous 72 hours.
- it is particularly important to comply with these measures when you employ people who come from or have resided in risk areas (seasonal workers),
- for pigs that are kept outside:
 - put up double fences to prevent contact with wild boars
 - place signs for passers-by that state that it is forbidden to feed the pigs

Early detection

Always contact your veterinarian when you find symptoms that might point to ASF or in the case of unusual mortality.

Eradication

There is no treatment against ASF. Disease control takes place through measures such as the culling of pigs and restrictions on the movements of animals

The applied measures are aimed at isolating the outbreak as soon as possible to prevent the disease from spreading and to eradicate the virus. These measures are laid down in the European legislation and are, among others:

- slaughtering all the pigs at the outbreak and destroying all the carcasses
- cleaning and disinfecting the contaminated farm
- establishing restriction zones around the outbreak where the movement of animals, goods and people is prohibited or limited.

***Do not hesitate to consult the checklist of items identified for the biosecurity audit**
https://www.fav-afsa.be/professionnels/productionanimale/animaux/circulaires/_documents/20210531_circ_instructioinveterinairesanalyseiderisque_FR_v1_.pdf





Thank you for your attention !

