

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 EU.

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 **58%** 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.

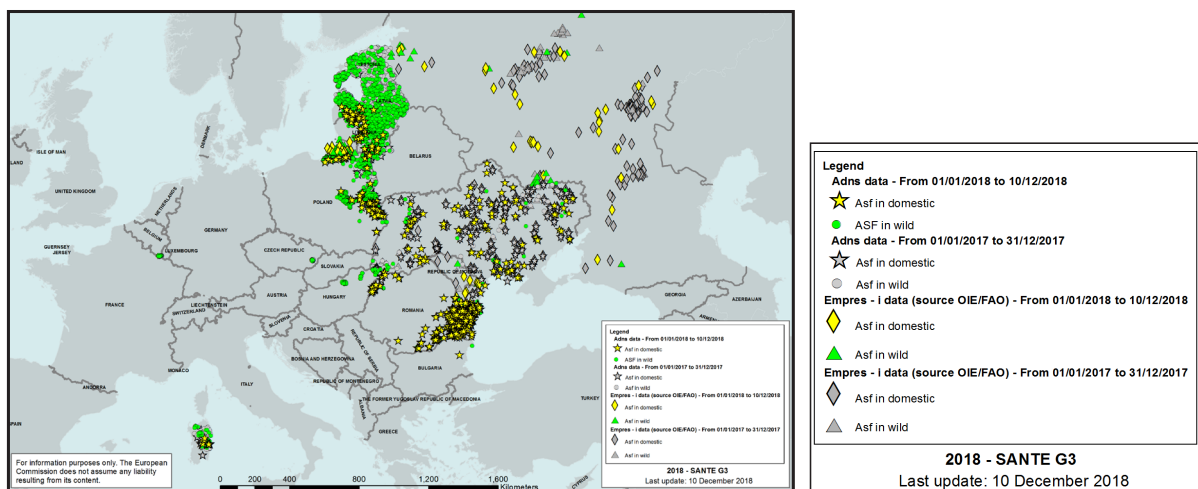
If you see unusual wild boar behaviour or, most likely, if you find a dead animal, you should consider the possibility that it has been infected by African swine fever (especially in the infected areas or areas at risk).

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.

* Specific provisions provided by national competent authority should be checked.

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).

Since 2013, the EU has allocated a total of **€95 million** for the prevention and eradication of the disease, which includes €48 million for eradication programmes and €47 million for emergency measures. 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>

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