



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Directorate G - Crisis management in food, animals and plants
Unit G3 – Official controls and eradication of diseases in animals

Brussels
SANCO G3/FB (19.04.2018)

SANTE/7113/2015 - Rev 9

WORKING DOCUMENT

African Swine Fever Strategy for the EU

This document does not necessarily represent the views of the Commission Services

Please note that this document has been established for information and consultation purposes only. It has not been adopted or in any way approved by the European Commission and should not be regarded as representing the views of the Commission Services. The European Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the information provided, nor does it accept responsibility for any use made thereof.

ASF Strategy for the EU – Rev. April 2018

a) Introduction

The ASF Strategy for the EU has been developed with the aim of establishing harmonised measures in response to the epidemiological situation with regard to African swine fever (ASF) in the EU.

The ASF Strategy is aimed to the Member States affected by the disease and to Member States free from the disease with a risk of introduction. It is intended to prevent the spread of the disease and eventually to eradicate the disease in the affected territories. This aim should be achieved by the application of harmonised measures, tailored to the specificity of each Member States, concerning among others wild boar metapopulation and pig herds.

Specific measures are foreseen introduction of the disease in wild boar in any newly infected area as the approach could differ from area to area based on the time the disease has been present in a given area.

In addition to the measures foreseen by the strategy, additional legal requirements apply based on the epidemiology of the disease and other measures put in place such as the establishment of protection and surveillance zones, the infected area¹ or the measures foreseen in the EU ASF regionalisation².

The measures pertaining to wild boar management are intended for all EU Member States with the aim of providing the basis for a coherent approach to the management of this wildlife resource. Even in absence of ASF, a long term planning is required to control the wild boar metapopulations³ and ensure an optimal coordination with national resources involved in wildlife conservation.

The Annex provides for key messages tailored to different target audiences in relation ASF; these should constitute the baseline for to setting up national awareness campaigns.

The measures established in this Strategy should be applied until the end of 2021 and reviewed following the developments in the epidemiological situation and scientific findings.

¹ Council Directive 2002/60/EC of 27 June 2002 laying down specific provisions for the control of African swine fever and amending Directive 92/119/EEC as regards Teschen disease and African swine fever (OJ L 192, 20.7.2002, p. 27).

² Commission Implementing Decision 2014/709/EU of 9 October 2014 concerning animal health control measures relating to African swine fever in certain Member States and repealing Implementing Decision 2014/178/EU (OJ L 295, 11.10.2014, p. 63).

³ EFSA Scientific Reports and Scientific Opinions: Scientific Report on Epidemiological analyses of African swine fever in the Baltic States and Poland (published on 7 November 2017); Simulation-based investigation of ASF spread and control in wildlife without consideration of human non-compliance to biosecurity (published on 7 November 2017); Epidemiological analyses on African swine fever in the Baltic countries and Poland (published on 23 March 2017); African swine fever (published on 14 July 2015); African swine fever (published on 7 April 2014); Mitigation measures for African swine fever virus in wild boar (published on 17 March 2014); Ticks as vectors of CCHF and ASF (published on 10 August 2010); African Swine Fever (published on 22 March 2010).

b) ASF measures to be applied for domestic pigs at least in the areas covered by Decision 2014/709/EU

2.1.1. Pig farms are classified in three categories:

- A. *Non- commercial farms (NCF)*: farms where pigs are kept only for fattening for own consumption and neither pigs nor any of their products leave the holding.
- B. *Commercial farms (CF)*: farms which sell pigs, send pigs to a slaughterhouse or move pig products off the holding.
- C. *Outdoor farms*: farms which pigs are kept temporarily or permanently outdoor.

2.1.2. Minimum biosecurity requirements for each category are defined:

I - Biosecurity criteria for non-commercial farms (NCF):

- a) No swill feeding and removal of animal by-products in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009.
- b) No contact between the pig(s) of the NCF, pigs from other holdings and feral pigs or wild boar. Pigs should be kept in a way that ensures that there is no direct, neither indirect, contact with pigs coming from other holdings or with pigs outside the premises nor with wild boar.
- c) No contact to any part of feral pigs (including hunted or dead wild boar/meat/by-products).
- d) The owner (or the person in charge of the pigs) should take appropriate biohygienic measures such as change clothes and boots on entering the stable and leaving the stable. Disinfection should be performed at the entrance of the holding and the stable.
- e) No hunting activity should be carried out 48h prior being in contact with pigs.
- f) No unauthorized persons/transport are allowed to enter the pig holding (stable) and records are kept of people and vehicles accessing the area where the pigs are kept.
- g) Home slaughtering is allowed only under veterinary supervision.
- h) No sows and/or boar used for reproduction are allowed on the holding (this does not apply to commercial farms).
- i) Commercially traded crops, vegetables, hay and straw have a very low ability to contain and maintain infectious ASFV. If the use of locally harvested grass and straw is considered to represent a risk under local prevailing conditions, the following should apply:
 - Ban of feeding fresh grass or grains⁴ to pigs unless treated to inactivate ASF virus or stored (out of reach of wild boar) for at least 30 days before feeding.
 - Ban on using straw⁵ for bedding of pigs unless treated to inactivate ASF virus or stored (out of reach of wild boar) for at least 90 days before use.
- j) Farms buildings should:
 - be built in such a way that no feral pigs or other animals (e.g. dogs) can enter the stable.

⁴ Originating from areas where ASF has been reported.

⁵ Originating from areas where ASF has been reported.

- Allow for disinfection facilities (or changing) for footwear and clothes at the entrance into the stable.

II - Biosecurity criteria for commercial farms:

- a) Same criteria as for NCF with, in addition, the following criteria:
- b) Stock-proof fencing of at least the stable and premises where feed and bedding are kept.
- c) Biosecurity plan approved/recommended by veterinary services according to the profile of farm and national legislation. This biosecurity plan should include, but is not limited to:
 - Establish the clean/dirty areas for personnel appropriate to the farm typology (e.g. changing rooms, shower, eating room).
 - Review, when applicable, the logistical arrangements for entry of new animals into the farm.
 - Detailed procedures for the disinfection of vehicles, fomites and personnel hygiene rules should be established and applied.
 - Set rules on food for workers on site and ban the keeping of pigs at workers' homes if applicable.
 - Dedicated recurrent awareness programme for all workers on the farm.
 - Review logistical arrangements in order to ensure proper separation between production units. Avoid pigs being in contact (directly or indirectly) with animal by-products and other production units.
 - Internal basic audit or self-evaluation for enforcing the biosecurity measures.

III - Biosecurity criteria for outdoor farms:

Outdoor keeping of pigs is banned.

2.1.3. Inspection and investigation regime

Inspection and investigation have to be performed by official veterinarians or contracted/designated veterinarians of the veterinary services. These are to be supported by awareness campaigns addressed to farmers.

Inspections of holdings will take place minimum once per year in the areas listed in the Annex to Commission Decision 2014/709/EU. This area can be further extended based on a risk assessment carried out by the competent authority. Inspection means that the veterinarian at task performs a veterinary interview with the farmer and observes and examines the pigs. In case of suspicion samples for laboratory investigations are taken. During the inspection the veterinarians are checking the identification of pigs, biosecurity of the farm and perform a verification of the owner data while performing a census of the pigs.

Investigation will be performed in the whole country. The principle of investigation will be based on an enhanced passive surveillance (examination of pig plus sampling for ASF if appropriate).

2.1.4. Recurrent awareness campaigns to target farmers (especially from NCF) should be performed at least for informing about the strategy and the role of the farmer so to encourage their full involvement in implantation of biosecurity rules, rapid reporting and participation in surveillance.

2.1.5. Sampling for laboratory investigations will be performed

- a) In case of clinical signs resembling ASF (e.g. fever or haemorrhagic lesions). If necessary, sampling should be repeated to exclude ASF when specific clinical signs occur.
- b) Each week, in the form of virological testing of at least the first two death (post weaning pigs or pigs older than 2 months) in each production unit.
- c) When ante or post-mortem signs raise suspicion at home slaughtering at least within the area covered by Commission Decision 2014/709/EU.

2.1.6. Laboratory tests for screening

- qRT-PCR from blood or organs has to be performed always for early detection and confirmation of ASF.
- Ab-ELISA: facultative if epidemiologically relevant (e.g. for research purposes or to date the moment of introduction).
- IPT (immunoperoxidase test): confirmatory test for ASF antibody detection either in serum and exudate tissue samples.

2.1.7. Area of application of the measures

Unless stated otherwise above, measure should be applied in the areas listed in the Annex to Commission Decision 2014/709/.

c) ASF measures to be applied for wild boar

3.1.1. Relevant terms and definitions.

Baiting: (non-sustaining feeding of wild boar): Attracting of wild boar with limited food (e.g. maize) only for the purpose of hunting. The maximum amount of food should not exceed 10kg/km²/month. Baiting should not, in any case, represent a source of feeding wild boar for sustaining the population during winter.

Culling of wild boar: shooting of wild boar with the intention of collecting and rendering the whole carcass (no dressing takes place).

Feeding places/devises for other species: (e.g. wild ruminants): Such feeding places for wild ruminants should not be accessible for wild boar. The feed should not be attractive for wild boar (e.g. hay).

Wider Area for Medium Term Actions (WAMTA): based on EFSA opinion of June 2015 and the scientific report of 2017, this area surrounds the areas under restriction as defined in Decision 2014/709/EU with a width up to several hundred kilometres.

This area should, in addition, take into account the risk of further spread of the disease for the period of the actions (2 to 4 years). This area should be established, following a risk assessment, around currently restricted areas and areas bordering with third countries where ASF is considered to be present. WAMTA can be established, based on the risk assessment, also in free Member States with a view to anticipate possible future spread of ASF.

This area should as well take into account the existing wild boar population distribution and densities and the existence of natural or artificial epidemiological barriers.

3.1.2. Main strategic points

The following points for controlling and eradicating ASF in the wild boar population are to be applied at least to the areas under restriction as defined in Decision 2014/709/EU. List of points:

- a) Baiting is allowed (non-sustained feeding, limited food only for attracting wild boar for hunting, not exceed 10kg/km²/month).
- b) Sustained feeding of wild boar is prohibited.
- c) Targeted hunting is encouraged in order to target adult and sub-adult females.
- d) The overall hunting bag should be balanced between male and females (50% each). Priority in reaching the quotas should be given to adult and sub-adult females.
- e) Starting from the border between Part I and Part II of Decision 2014/709/EU, in a strip in Part II at least 20 km wide, hunting should be conducted as such to avoid excessive movement of animals. The size of the areas can be reviewed based on the outcome of a risk analysis.
- f) The minimum biosecurity requirements for hunters are applied.

3.1.3. Measures to be taken in newly infected areas.

Measures to be applied in the case of the occurrence of ASF in wild boar in an area, anywhere in the EU, which was previously unaffected by the disease.

- a) Newly infected area⁶ – at the onset of the infection in wild boar:
 - i. Total ban of wild boar hunting.
 - ii. Restricted access to the infected area.
 - iii. Specific training for hunters to reduce the probability of further spread of the virus in the environment and outside the infected area.
 - iv. Active patrolling to find carcasses (by trained staff) in order to reinforce passive surveillance.
 - v. Containers to store wild boar carcasses in each hunting ground or at least within the infected area if not possible otherwise. In each storage-point means for cleaning and disinfection have to be available.
- vi. Biosecurity measures in hunting grounds applied by all persons searching for and handling wild boar carcasses (e.g. avoid possible contamination of vehicles, yards and houses).

⁶ As described in Council Directive 2002/60/EC.

- vii. Testing of all wild boar carcasses.
- viii. Checking biosecurity measures in all pig holdings in the infected area.
- b) Infected area – after 2-3 months without cases in the previously set infected area:
 - i. Culling of wild boar by trained hunters. This implies no dressing of the animals (no evisceration). Shot wild boar to be put in plastic bags to minimise the risk of spreading the fluids of the animal.
 - ii. Biosecurity in place (hunting grounds fulfil the prescribed biosecurity measures approved by competent authority).
 - iii. All culled animals to be rendered.
 - iv. Active patrolling to find carcasses (trained staff) in order to reinforce passive surveillance.
 - v. No driven hunts.
 - vi. Total ban on feeding (no baiting).
 - vii. Testing of all found carcasses and shot wild boar.
- c) Infected area – after 4-5 months without cases (including a full summer period):
 - i. Hunting by trained hunters with LOCAL consumption of wild boar meat after negative testing.
 - ii. Application of minimum biosecurity requirements for hunters
 - iii. No driven hunts.
 - iv. Total ban on feeding (no baiting).
 - v. Testing of all found carcasses and shot wild boar.
- d) Around infected area (indicatively 100 km radius from the border of infected areas); measures to be applied at the onset of the infected area:
 - i. Strong reduction of wild boar density needed. To achieve this, hunting by targeting adult females followed by sub-adult females (sex ratio of the hunting bag 1 male : 2 females). This needs to be coupled by a complete ban of any feeding (both sustaining and attractive).
 - ii. All shot animals and found carcasses need to be tested with using qRT-PCR.
 - iii. Checking biosecurity measures in all pig holdings based on the priorities set out by the competent authority.

3.1.4. Minimum biosecurity requirements for hunters and for all staff searching for and handling wild boar carcasses:

These should be foreseen by the competent authority; at least these aspects should be included every time hunting of wild boar is performed or wild boar carcasses are handled in areas under restriction as defined in Decision 2014/709/EU or in at risk areas :

- a) At least one dedicated authorised dressing facility should be available for each hunting ground. The dressing area should be protected against unauthorised access by people and animals, equipped with water, sufficient effective disinfectants available and waste collection equipment. In case dressing area is not present in the hunting ground, then the closest hunting ground with a dressing facility should be used.
- b) For each hunting ground a facility/premise should be equipped with refrigerator (or procedures reaching equivalent results in terms of keeping the carcass until laboratory results are available).

- c) Hunted wild boar should remain in the premises of the hunting ground until tested; only negative carcasses can be released. To achieve this individual identification of carcasses is required.
- d) Offal from hunted wild boar should not be removed from the animal in the field; shot wild boar should be brought to dedicated authorised dressing facilities limiting loss of body fluids (including blood).
- e) After dressing the wild boar, the place and equipment used (including transport vehicles) should be washed and disinfected with authorized disinfectants.
- f) Animal by products should be collected and processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009.
- g) Biosecurity measures shall be applied when searching for and handling wild boar carcasses to avoid possible contamination of vehicles, yards and houses.

3.1.5. Sampling of wild boar in Member States covered by Decision 2014/709/EU as follows:

- a) Principle of sampling in the whole country (areas regulated by Decision 2014/709/EU and free areas of the same Member State) should be based on enhanced passive surveillance: all found dead and sick wild boar have to be tested for ASF using qRT-PCR. In areas included in Parts II and III of the Annex of Decision 2014/709/EU, sampling in case of group of wild boar found dead simultaneously on the same spot can be pooled for PCR testing from a representative sample of the group.
- b) Additional sampling (active surveillance) from hunted animals has to be performed as regulated by Decision 2014/709/EU. In areas of Part I of the Annex to Decision 2014/709/EU all hunted animals which are intended to be taken out of that area must be tested for ASF (qRT-PCR). In areas of Part II and III of the Annex to Decision 2014/709/EU sampling of all hunted animals and of all found dead/sick animals has to be conducted (100% sampling and testing by qRT-PCR). The hunted animals of these areas should be tested additionally for antibodies against ASF virus.
- c) From hunted animals only blood samples are requested (organs in case of blood samples unavailable).

3.1.6. Removal of wild boar carcasses in Member States covered by Decision 2014/709/EU:

- a) Carcass finding and safe disposal to be carried out at least in the areas listed in the annex of Decision 2014/709/EU and in any at risk area as defined by the competent authority. The impact of this measure is more effective the sooner after the death of the animal that its carcass is removed.
- b) In case of detection of ASF in unaffected areas, the passive finding of carcasses should be supplemented by active search by professionals in hotspots established by the competent authority.
- c) The disposal of carcasses to be carried out either by burial, bringing to the rendering plant or burning (under supervision of the competent veterinary authorities). Possible use of appropriate chemicals for local disinfection.

3.1.7. Recurrent awareness campaigns:

- a) Should be foreseen for hunters for informing about the new strategy and the intended goals so to encourage the participation of hunters in the strategy. Emphasis

should be given to the need to respect biosecurity measures during hunting and the restrictions for movement of wild boar products.

- b) Specific informative material should be displayed at the main transit areas (ports, airports and major communication axis) informing hunters and travellers of the bans imposed by the ASF regionalisation.

3.1.8. Measures in the WAMTA

The objective in the WAMTA should be the programmed reduction of wild boar. The measures should include:

- a) Baiting is allowed (non-sustained feeding, limited food only for attracting wild boar for hunting, not exceed 10kg/km²/month).
- b) Sustained feeding of wild boar is prohibited.
- c) Targeted hunting is encouraged in order to target adult and sub-adult females.
- d) The overall hunting bag should be balanced between male and females (50% each). Priority in reaching the quotas should be given to adult and sub-adult females.
- e) Principle of sampling should be based on enhanced passive surveillance: all found dead and sick wild boar have to be tested for ASF using qRT-PCR. Active patrolling to find carcasses (by trained staff) can be carried out to reinforce surveillance.

Annex

KEY MESSAGES FOR AWARENESS RAISING CAMPAINGS IN MEMBER STATES^{7, 8}.

RELEVANCE OF THE DISEASE:

ASF is a devastating, usually deadly, infectious disease of pigs and wild boar; it represents a serious threat to pig farmers worldwide; it does not affect humans nor other species but there is no treatment or vaccine for ASF. The disease can cause severe health impact on farms, disruption of international trade of animals and animal products, and massive economic losses.

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 sector (year 2016, source DG AGRI).
- Pigmeat accounts for 50% of total EU meat production (year 2016, data source DG AGRI).
- Pigmeat is the most exported of all the meats produced in the EU: it represents 62% of EU total meat exports (year 2016, data source DG AGRI).
- During the planning of awareness campaigns the importance of the pig sector at local level and not only at EU level should be highlighted.

The awareness campaigns should be built on facts (e.g. ASF kills pigs and wild boar, can hamper livelihood of farmers, can make local wild boar population decrease significantly or even disappear) to inform, educate and motivate all stakeholders in order to increase surveillance and reporting, enhance prevention practice and prevent further spread and introduction of ASF in new areas.

Particular relevance should be given to the reasons and benefits for stakeholders to act, and disadvantages if actions against ASF are not taken.

Communication should be frequent, multiple communication channels should be properly chosen. Opportunities for audience feedback and evaluation should be created.

Awareness campaigns should be periodically reviewed to take into account new information.

Awareness campaigns should be tailored to reach the intended target audience. The main target groups should include:

1. VETERINARIANS (public and private)

Why should ASF be stopped?

- ASF represents a serious threat to pig farming.
- There are no treatments or vaccines for ASF.
- The disease can cause massive economic losses.

⁷ http://web.oie.int/rr-europe/eng/regprog/en_ASF_depository.htm#ASFcampaignmaterial

⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/health/regulatory_committee/presentations_en

What veterinary services should do to stop ASF?

- Perform surveillance.
- Ensure transparent and prompt reporting of suspicions.
- Contribute to and monitor awareness campaigns.
- Apply biosecurity measures between visits (bio-hygienic measures)⁹.
- Ensure and advice to enhance biosecurity⁴ in holdings.

Suggested communication tools:

- Press material, articles, media buying in specialised magazines and regional/local media
- Print material: Posters, Leaflets, Factsheets -to be distributed by targeted mailing to veterinarian associations
- Organisation of events, seminars training, conferences for this target
- Online web and social media
- Short videos and animations –only if distributed to target

2. FARMERS

Why should ASF be stopped?

- ASF represents a serious threat to pig farming.
- The disease can cause massive economic losses (direct and indirect).
- ASF can threaten farmer's livelihood.

What farmers should do to stop ASF?

- Report signs and symptoms of African swine fever or abnormal mortality.
- Make sure that all leftover food is put in sealed waste containers and not feed to domestic and feral pigs.
- Ensure and enhance biosecurity⁴ at farm level as agreed with competent authority.

Suggested communication tools:

- Press material, articles, media buying in specialised magazines and regional/local media
- Print material: Posters, Leaflets, Factsheets -to be distributed by targeted mailing to farmers associations
- Organisation of events, seminars training, conferences for this target
- Online web and social media
- Short videos and animations –only if distributed to target

3. HUNTERS

Why should ASF be stopped?

- To avoid restriction or ban of hunting in infected areas.

⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/ad_control-measures_asf_wrk-doc-sante-2015-7113.pdf

- Because of ASF the disease wild boar populations can decrease significantly or even disappear.

What hunters should do to stop ASF?

- Collaborate with the competent authority in the finding and reporting of wild boar carcasses.
- Clean and disinfect 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.

Suggested communication tools:

- Press material, articles, media buying in specialised magazines and regional/local media
- Print material: Posters, Leaflets, Factsheets -to be distributed by targeted mailing to hunters associations, but also in airports, train stations, other transport facilities, including borders and in natural areas near wild boar
- Organisation of events, seminars training, conferences for this target
- Online web and social media
- Short videos and animations –only if distributed to target

4. GENERAL PUBLIC (Including travellers and transporters of feeds/foods)

Why should ASF be stopped?

- To actively participate in protecting and animal health and pig producers livelihood.
- To actively contribute to stop ASF causing massive economic losses.
- To comply with legislation.

What the general public should do to stop ASF?

- Do not introduce live pigs or pigs' products (fresh pork, refrigerated or frozen pork, sausages, ham salt-cured meat, pig fat) from extra EU territories.
- Only move pork and other pig products from ASF restricted areas only if it is labelled with the EU oval stamp.
- Do not leave food in area accessible to wild boar

Suggested communication tools:

- Online web and social media
- Short videos and animations –to be displayed when general public is travelling –airports, train stations and other transport facilities, including borders- in natural areas near wild boar or in super markets
- Press material, articles, media buying in travel, food or environmental magazines

- Print material: Posters, Leaflets, Factsheets -to be distributed in transport facilities, supermarkets or natural parks