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African swine fever confirmed in Belgium

On 14 September 2018, African swine fever (ASF) was confirmed in wild boar in Belgium for the first time since 1985. In total, two wild boars found in the Belgian Province of Luxembourg (an area close to the French border) have tested positive for the disease. The two boar were part of four (three dead and one sick) found during surveillance of the area by Belgian authorities. This is the first time the disease has been detected in Western Europe in many years.

The source of the cases in Belgium is not yet known and investigations are ongoing. The European Commission has confirmed that interim protective measures under the specific EU Directive for the control of ASF (Council Directive 2002/60/EC) are in place in Belgium.



Figure 1. The approximate location (red star) of where the African swine fever positive wild boars were found in Belgium.

As detailed in recent updates ASF is already present in a number of EU Member States including Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and more recently Bulgaria. ASF was also confirmed in China for the first time in August 2018.

Risk to Ireland and Disease Awareness Campaign

The illegal or inadvertent importation of meat infected with the ASF virus and subsequent feeding to pigs is the main risk pathway for the introduction of ASF into Ireland and it is something DAFM focuses on in its ongoing ASF awareness campaign. For example DAFM has distributed a [multilingual poster](#) to over 300 pig farms, warning of the dangers of visitors or staff returning from affected regions of the EU and bringing back meat or meat onto Irish pig farms. African swine fever information factsheets and biosecurity advice leaflets for both vets and farmers have been circulated to stakeholders and are available on the DAFM website.

Advice to pig farmers

- Be aware of the clinical signs of ASF and consult your vet or contact your local Regional Veterinary Office if you have any concerns (clinical signs of ASF found [here](#), RVO contact details found [here](#))
- Ensure that pigs particularly backyard or outdoor pigs do not get access to rubbish or waste food products.
- Implement stringent biosecurity on your premises including ensuring that unauthorised persons do not have access to your pigs at any time.
- If you employ workers from affected countries you should discuss the issue with them, asking them not bring back food products. If they have visited pig farms in affected countries they should avoid contact with pigs here for at least 72 hours and ensure that any clothing that might have been used on farms in the affected country is not used on farms here.

Advice to members of the public

Do not bring meat or meat products into Ireland from ASF affected countries and do not to take food off airplanes or ships.

Further information

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/animalhealthwelfare/diseasecontrol/africanswinefever/> .

National Disease Control Centre
14 September 2018

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