

# How Belgium keeps ASF at bay

## All domestic pigs are ASF free

On 13 September 2018, African swine fever (ASF) virus was confirmed for the first time since 1985 in 2 wild boars in the municipality Etalle (province of Luxembourg). Belgium succeeds in keeping domestic pigs and captive wild pigs free of ASF contamination. Even the spread of ASF within wild boars has been prevented.

Strict measures have been taken to prevent contamination of domestic swine. After the outbreak of ASF in September 2018, an infected zone was established. In this region very few domestic pigs are kept (most pig farms are located in the northern part of Belgium). All cases in wild boars were found in the same region.

A clear strategy based on transparency, traceability, intensive collaboration with neighboring countries and ongoing efforts turns out to be an effective way to prevent the spread of the virus in Belgium. Exported pork from Belgium is free from ASF virus. Within the European Union, trade of Belgian pork is free.

## WHAT IS AFRICAN SWINE FEVER

African swine fever (ASF) is a highly contagious hemorrhagic disease of pigs, warthogs, European wild boar and American wild pigs. All age groups are equally susceptible. With high virulence forms of the virus, ASF is characterized by high fever, loss of appetite, hemorrhages in the skin and internal organs, and death in 2-10 days on average. Mortality rates may be as high as 100%. ASF is not a human health threat.

# Domestic pigs in Belgium and the location of the infected zone

The majority of domestic pigs (94%) is kept in the northern part of Belgium. The infected zone is situated in a small southern part (Zone II and Zone I).

## Europe



## Belgium



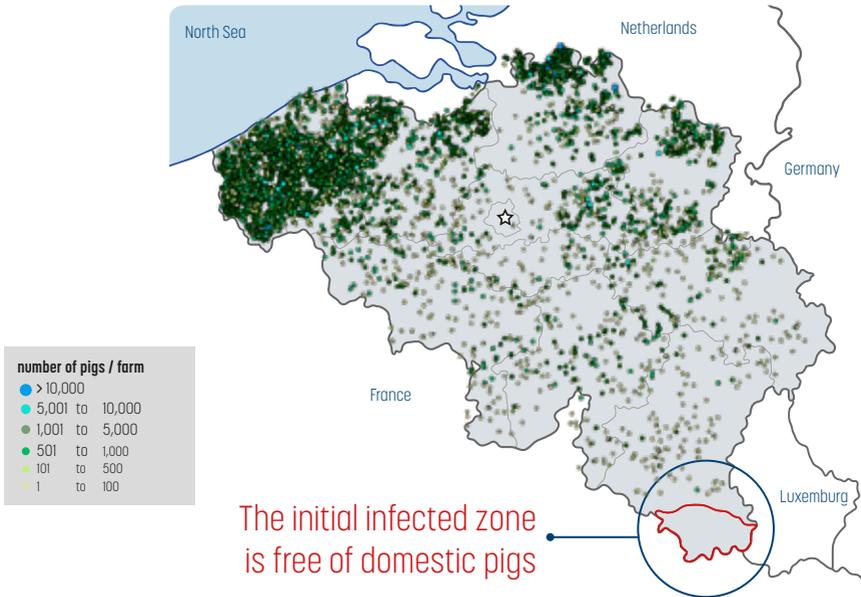
### DETAIL OF THE ZONES

Situation unchanged since 8 April 2019

All domestic pigs in the initial infection zone were preventively eradicated by 2 October 2018 to avoid the contamination of domestic pigs and to protect animal health and the commercial interests of the Belgian pork industry. The products of these eradicated pigs did not enter the food chain or were used for the feed industry.



# Pig holdings in Belgium



Based on European legislation, and in close cooperation with the European Commission, Belgian authorities installed two zones: "Zone I" and "Zone II", according to the identified risk.

**Zone II the infected zone** (see map): eradication by culling and active search of dead wild boars. Analysis of all dead wild boars. Human circulation forbidden.

**Zone I the buffer zone:** (see map): active search, removal and analysis of all dead wild boar, eradication. Fence network on the border with Zone II.

# Approval OIE of ASF-free status

Belgium currently has a free status for domestic and wild pigs kept in captivity.  
The ASF-free status has been approved by the OIE.



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## Kingdom of Belgium



**To whom it may concern**

I undersigned, Jean-François Heymans, Chief Veterinary Officer and Belgian delegate to the OIE (World Organization for Animal Health) declare that domestic pigs and wild pigs kept in captivity in Belgium are free from African Swine Fever in accordance with Chapter 15 of the OIE Terrestrial Code.

The Approved OIE self-declaration is accessible via the following links:

- <http://www.oie.int/en/animal-health-in-the-world/self-declared-disease-status/>
- [http://www.afscs.fgov.be/businesssections/animalproduction/animalhealth/africanswinefever/oie\\_documents/2019\\_04\\_Belgium\\_ASF\\_ANG.pdf](http://www.afscs.fgov.be/businesssections/animalproduction/animalhealth/africanswinefever/oie_documents/2019_04_Belgium_ASF_ANG.pdf)

Any change in the epidemiological situation will be immediately published on the FASFC's website\* with an adaptation of this declaration, and will be notified to the OIE in accordance with its provisions.

Brussels, 16 September 2019.



**Dr. Jean-François HEYMANS**  
Chief Veterinary Officer  
OIE Delegate for Belgium

\*<http://www.afscs.be/santearimale/pesteporcineafricaine/>

Our mission is to ensure the safety and the quality of our food in order to protect humans, animals and plants.

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The OIE self-declaration is updated on a weekly basis and is accessible on the website:

[www.oie.int/animal-health-in-the-world/self-declared-disease-status](http://www.oie.int/animal-health-in-the-world/self-declared-disease-status)



# Focusing on traceability and transparency in close collaboration with neighboring countries

**Additional information in English is available on the website of the FASFC (Federal Agency of the Safety of the Food Chain):**  
[www.favv-afsca.fgov.be/businesssectors/animalproduction/animalhealth/africanswinefever](http://www.favv-afsca.fgov.be/businesssectors/animalproduction/animalhealth/africanswinefever)

*This page also provides the link to the immediate notification report to the OIE and follow-up reports.*



## Traceability

The origin of the pigs can be traced through the **SANITEL database** of the FASFC, in which are registered by means of their ear tags:

- all pig holders, holdings and pig herds
- the movement of pigs
- the identification of pigs.

Pigs receive a new, additional, ear tag every time they leave a holding to go to another holding. This allows traceability of all animals to the holdings of origin and residence.

When issuing **health certificates** for export of pork or pork products from Belgium to third countries, the certifying officers of the FASFC guarantee the bilateral agreements laid down in the relevant protocols and certificates concluded between competent authorities of Belgium or the European Commission and the third countries.

## Transparency

Total transparency is essential for the management of ASF in Belgium, Europe and worldwide and to ensure the necessary trust between Belgium and its commercial and other partners. Therefore, the Belgian Veterinary Authority – the Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC) – continues to inform about the situation and the measures taken through different platforms of communication.

## Together

The European ASF experts use the Belgian approach as a good example of how to eradicate ASF disease. Belgium initiated a closer collaboration with the neighboring countries through

- Permanent concertation, collaboration and exchange of information
- Transboundary measures
- Cross-level cooperation

For the actual status of the number of positive cases in the wild population, please visit:  
[www.favv.be/businesssectors/animalproduction/animalhealth/africanswinefever](http://www.favv.be/businesssectors/animalproduction/animalhealth/africanswinefever)

# Belgian strategy for eradication of ASF in wild

Since the onset of the ASF disease in Belgium, all involved Belgian authorities have elaborated a strategy for the eradication of the virus, taking into account the advice of the European ASF experts. The common goal is the eradication of the ASF virus, which is also in line with the harmonized EU veterinary law.

## MAIN STRATEGY

### Focuses on

- A complete standstill within the high-risk zone,
- An enhanced passive surveillance in wild boar (active search for dead wild boar within Zone II),
- A reduction in the number of wild boar through intensified hunting outside the high-risk zone and the installation of traps (ASF laboratory testing of sick pigs regardless of the clinical symptoms).



## ONGOING EFFORTS

All involved parties – farmers, veterinarians, authorities – stay alert to ensure biosecurity.

### Pig holdings

- Enhanced passive surveillance is maintained

### Wild boars

- Intensive search and removal of carcasses
- Ongoing eradication of the wild boar population
- Different fence networks put in place: since the onset of African swine fever infection in Belgium, in addition to the highway/big traffic axes which serve as physical barriers, different fence networks have been put in place mainly on the border of and within the Zone II and also on French territory.

For more information, please contact:

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