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Romania Confirms ASF on a Commercial Hog Farm

Report Categories:

Livestock and Products

Pest/Disease Occurrences

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Report Highlights:

Nearly one year after the first case of African Swine Fever (ASF) was detected in a Romanian backyard swine herd in Tulcea County, Romanian Veterinary Authority officials confirmed that ASF was detected in a large commercial farm, also in Tulcea County. Immediate disease control measures were applied, including culling of 45,000 hogs, the farm's entire inventory. Previously ASF had only been detected among backyard herd and wild boars.

General Information:

After several dozen cases of ASF in Tulcea County among backyard holdings over the past three weeks, the Romanian Veterinary Authority confirmed on June 28, 2018, that ASF also reached a commercial swine farm located in the same county. This marks first outbreak in a Romanian commercial swine farm since ASF was first detected in a northeastern Romania in backyard holding in August 2017. Once the virus was confirmed, the local authorities applied immediate measures as per Romania's ASF Contingency Plan, which included the biosecurity measures strengthening and designation of the surveillance and protection areas. Eight check points were established to prevent the disease spreading outside the county.

Two days after the virus was confirmed, the Veterinary Authority announced that the farm's entire swine herd of nearly 45,000 pigs would be culled and their carcasses destroyed to limit the infection. This represents about one percent of Romania's total swine inventory, which was estimated at 4.4 million heads in December 2017. Several mobile incinerators of large capacity were brought to Tulcea County to perform this action. Two EU experts also worked with Romanian authorities to carry out this complex process with specific advice. Once depopulated, the hog barns will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Financial compensation is provided to the owners. The epidemiologic investigation regarding the source of infection in the commercial farm is underway. Samples will be collected from the affected farm during the culling process.

ASF is a significant threat across Romania, but especially in the counties sharing the same border with already infected Ukraine and Moldova Republic. Although wild boars are often blamed as the source of transmission, the human factor (contaminated meat, shoes, clothes, tires, etc.) appears to be equally important when assessing ASF risk for Romania.