

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: African Swine Fever- An Unwelcome Arrival in Germany

Country: Germany

Post: Berlin

Report Category: Agricultural Situation, Agriculture in the Economy, Agriculture in the News, Livestock and Products, Pest/Disease Occurrences

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Report Highlights:

On September 10, Germany's Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture confirmed an African swine fever (ASF) case in a wild boar found in Eastern Germany near the German-Polish border. The first ASF case in Germany jeopardizes \$867 million in exports to China, which will likely result in increased pork exports from other major suppliers, including the United States. ASF was not entirely unexpected, given the recent rise of cases in Western Poland. However, the confirmed ASF case will be devastating for the German pork sector which is still reeling from the Covid-19 crisis, including slaughter facility disruptions stemming from outbreaks among its workers, excess supply, declining consumption, trade disruptions, and depressed prices.

On September 10, Germany's Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture announced that the National Reference Laboratory Friedrich-Löffler-Institute (FLI) in Riems confirmed a case of ASF in a wild boar found near the German-Polish border in the village of Sembtem, Spree-Neiße district. This is the first ASF case in Germany and it was only a matter of time especially given the recent rise of cases in Western Poland. The risk of introducing the pathogen into Germany was rated as high according to the FLI due to the proximity to the border of the latest Polish cases. However, an introduction by humans via contaminated food cannot be excluded.

On-site ASF control measures are being conducted by the general veterinary authorities and the Provincial Crisis Management Center. A fence is now being erected around a 4 km radius of the site where the infected wild boar was found. Samples taken from bones of the decomposing carcass of the wild boar suggest that ASF entered Germany several weeks ago, indicating that additional ASF detections are likely. Search parties are looking for more dead boar carcasses in the area.

ASF is a highly contagious and deadly viral disease affecting both domestic and feral (wild) pigs in all age groups. ASF is not a threat to human health and cannot be transmitted from pigs to humans. ASF is spread by contact with infected animals' body fluids. It can be spread by ticks that feed on infected animals. People are also a source of spread; as they can move the virus on vehicles or clothing. It can also be spread by feeding pigs uncooked garbage that contains infected pork products. There is no treatment or vaccine available for this disease. The only way to stop this deadly disease is to depopulate all affected or exposed swine herds. The World Organization for Animal Health, a reference organization of the World Trade Organization, requires reporting of ASF.

Germany became one of the top pork exporters to China in 2019, with sales reaching \$867 million. As a result of the confirmation of ASF in Germany, China and others are expected to ban German pork imports, as was the case when ASF was detected in Poland and other exporting European countries. This will exacerbate the glut of German pork in the EU, which had been fueled by declining domestic consumption. Meanwhile, the German pork sector is still suffering from the impact of Covid-19. Outbreaks among workers reduced slaughter capacity. Hog prices are expected to drop even more since the German pork sector is heavily dependent on trade, with exports exceeding \$5.9 billion in 2019. While German pork will still be eligible for sale in the EU market, other major global pork producers will need to fill the gap created by Germany's potential loss of its Chinese pork export market. The United States, Brazil, Spain, Denmark, and the Netherlands may experience a boost in trade.

Attachments:

No Attachments.