

## FAQ

# African swine fever in wild boar



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In mid-February 2014, African swine fever was detected in wild boar in Poland; Lithuania had confirmed cases of the disease at the end of January. In both countries, the affected areas are located at the Byelorussian border. Thus, the notifiable disease, which has been spreading in Russia and the neighboring countries since 2007, has arrived on our doorstep. Increased awareness is necessary!

**Please help us to minimize the introduction risk and to detect an outbreak without delay!**

### What is African swine fever?

African swine fever is a virus disease which only affects swine (domestic pigs and wild boar). In its main distribution area, the African countries South of the Sahara and several Mediterranean countries, the disease can be transmitted by soft ticks, which however are of no importance in our latitudes.

### What does the disease look like?

In European wild boar, the infection causes very severe, but unspecific general symptoms, such as fever, weakness, anorexia, movement disorders and respiratory problems. Diarrhoea and hemorrhages (nose-bleed, bloody diarrhoea, bleeding of the skin) may also occur. Sometimes, diseased animals will show a reduced tendency to escape or other signs such as slow movements and disorientation. The disease equally affects all age groups and sexes and most affected animals die within little more than one week.

When opening the carcass, attention should be paid to enlarged, “bloody” lymph nodes, enlarged spleen, and punctiform or sheet-like hemorrhages of organs, skin or subcutis. Lungs and respiratory tract are often filled with foam.

Absence of these signs does not exclude African swine fever!

### How is the disease transmitted?

The disease can be transmitted directly from animal to animal or by contaminated objects. Under unfavourable conditions, carelessly throwing away a meat sandwich can be sufficient to introduce the disease. Transmission by blood is particularly efficient. A tiny droplet is sufficient to transmit the infection! Therefore, it is crucial that hunters strictly observe hygienic measures.

### What must be observed?

**Increased awareness is necessary!** Please pay attention to increased numbers of dead wildlife and send samples, preferably blood and spleen samples (if nothing else is available also samples of other organs or a bone), to the competent veterinary diagnostic agency for investigation. Even decaying samples can still be investigated. Be particularly cautious handling objects that were in contact with sweat. This includes boots, cloths, carcass storage containers, knives and clothing. Please be aware that trophies and wild boar products from affected areas may represent a risk. The same applies to hunting clothing and equipment.

### How is the disease controlled?

Unfortunately, no vaccine is available! Therefore, only hygienic measures and population control measures can be used to combat the disease. On the federal level, control measures are based on the Swine Fever Regulation.

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