

## FAQ

# African swine fever in wild boar



African Swine Fever (ASF) has reached the EU. Since spring 2014, cases have occurred continuously in wild boar in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Poland. Increased vigilance is required!

**Please help us minimize the risk of introduction and detect a possible outbreak as soon as possible!**

## FAQ African swine fever in wild boar

### What is African swine fever?

African swine fever (ASF) is a virus disease which only affects swine (domestic pigs and wild boar). In its main endemic area, i.e. 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. In addition, diarrhoea and haemorrhages (nosebleed, bloody diarrhoea, bleeding of the skin) may occur. Sometimes diseased animals will show a reduced tendency to escape or other symptoms 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 swine fever!

### How is the disease transmitted?

The disease can be transmitted directly between animals 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?

Please pay attention to increased numbers of dead wildlife and send samples to the competent veterinary diagnostic agency for investigation. Dry blood swabs are sufficient for reliable diagnostics. If no other material is available, even a marrowbone can be used. The most suitable samples are blood and spleen samples, as they enable extensive diagnostics and virus characterization. The quality of the sample is more or less negligible. Even decaying samples can still be investigated! Be particularly cautious handling objects that were in contact with blood. 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 clothing items and other objects used when handling the carcass.

### How is the disease controlled?

Unfortunately, no vaccine is available! Therefore, only hygienic measures and population control measures can be applied to combat the disease. There is no patent remedy; control measures must be adapted to the individual situation in the respective district. Your assistance is crucial!

On the federal level, control measures are based on the Swine Fever Regulation.