ASF - WEEKLY INFO - 6/2019 (28/02/2019)

To: CVOs of all Member States, contact points of MS on ASF, EU Permanent Representations

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Subject: Summary of main activities on African swine fever (18 February 2019 – 26 February 2019)

Message:

Please note the recent and most important activities related to African swine fever (ASF).

1. Epidemiological situation of ASF in the EU.

The summary of epidemiological situation (18 February – 24 February 2019) of ASF in the EU is attached to this info note. There were no major (or unexpected) ASF occurrences during this period.

2. ASF regionalisation measures for the EU.

The regionalisation measures for ASF were reviewed by a written procedure. Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/315 of 21 February 2019 amending the Annex to Implementing Decision 2014/709/EU concerning animal health control measures relating to African swine fever in certain Member States was published in the Official Journal of the EU on 22 February 2019 (OJ L 51, 22.2.2019, p. 53). An indicative map summarising the current EU regionalisation is available online on the European Commission's website. An additional review of ASF regionalisation took place on 25-26 February 2019 at the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (the relevant Commission Implementing Decision will be published in due course).

3. The Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed.

At the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed on 25-26 February 2019, representatives of Member States (Belgium, Bulgaria, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland and Romania) presented an updated information on the current situation of ASF. Slovakia made a

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Internet: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_food-safety/
presentation on ASF preparedness. Finland shared its experience on ASF prevention measures, in particular in relation to the border controls, using sniffer dog Aino (photo below). All the presentations are available online.³


The Commission is performing a fact-finding visit to Austria from 25 February to 1 March to evaluate the implementation of surveillance and emergency preparedness in relation to African swine fever in wild boar.

5. Commission participation at the Chinese-European Seminar on ASF

The Commission services participated at the “Chinese-European Seminar on cooperation towards ASF control and safeguarding mutual trade” that took place on 21 February at the French Embassy in Beijing. The event was co-organised by Chinese-EU industry (CMA, IMS and UECEBV) with participation of a number of EU Member States at Chief or Deputy Veterinary Officer level and agriculture attachés and high and medium level representatives of from Chinese authorities (MARA, GACC and SAMR).

The Seminar included a number of presentations and interventions with different levels of transparency, interest, technical details, political weight and trade implications. The EU interventions had been previously coordinated and presented a coherent view and vision of the ASF situation and measures in place.

The seminar concluded with the signature of a MoU by meat industry from China and the EU that highlights the explicit support of Uu and Chinese meat industry to OIE standards on regionalization and on the disease status when ASF is present only in wild boar population.

³ https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/health/legislation/committee/presentations_en
6. Eradication of ASF in Czechia confirmed.

Less than two years after it has been hit by ASF, and following massive efforts to eradicate the disease, Czechia received at the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed took (26 of February 2019) the support of the Member States to lift all the restrictions in the country. Following the discovery of the disease in a wild board in June 2017, in the district of Zlín, the Commission had deployed its EU Veterinary Emergency team of experts and started working very closely with the national and regional authorities to adopt veterinary measures to control the disease. This type of targeted measures has also been implemented in recent months in Belgium, the latest Member State concerned by the disease. Since no more cases of African swine fever had been identified in Czechia as of April 2018, the Commission proposed to the Member States to lift all the restrictions. This proposal has been endorsed by a vote in a Standing Committee. Commissioner Andriukaitis, welcomed this vote, stressing that "the example of Czechia demonstrates that, when the tools and strategies developed in the EU are properly applied, the disease can be controlled and even eradicated. It shows that our policies are effective and there is no place for unjustified trade restrictions. This is a small reward, yet we cannot afford to relax our efforts since the fight against African swine fever is still ongoing". The Commission will formally adopt the Decision in the coming weeks.

The presentation of Czechia made at the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (25-26 of February 2019) is available online.

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6. Commissioner Andriukaitis' exchanges on ASF.

On 22 February, Commissioner Andriukaitis met with the Mr Luis Planas, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of Spain, in Madrid. During the meeting, they discussed the current state of play with regards to ASF in the EU and the importance of preventive actions to avoid the disease re-entering Spain (where it has been eradicated for the past 3 decades).

Commissioner Andriukaitis also shared on Twitter the video recently posted in SANTE website showing the spread of ASF over the past 5 years, highlighting the importance of cooperation and awareness raising to contain the disease:

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Yours faithfully,

Bernard Van Goethem

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ANNEX

Agenda of upcoming main events related to ASF

- The next Standing Group of Experts on African Swine Fever in Europe under the GF-TADs (SGE ASF12) would be taking place in Prague on 11 and 12 March 2019. In addition, a combined GF-TADs / BTSF (Better Training for Safer Food) event (back-to-back with the SGE ASF12) will take place on 13 March 2019 in Prague. This will be a "Technical training on eradicating ASF: focus on the Czech Republic experience". More than 70 participants will attend both events and representatives from China and Canada will join to foster cooperation and be familiarised to GF-TADs Europe activities.


- EFSA: ASF working group meeting, 19-20 March 2019 in Parma, Italy.

- The Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed will take place on 20-21 of March 2019.