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on the guidelines on the prevention, control and eradication of African swine fever in the Union ('ASF guidelines')

(C/2023/1504)

(Text with EEA relevance)

Table of Contents

ABBREVIATIONS

Ab	Antibodies
AHL	Regulation (EU) 2016/429
ASF	African swine fever
ASF guidelines	Guidelines on the prevention, control and eradication of African swine fever in the Union
ASFV	African swine fever virus
ASF Regulation	Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 laying down special disease control measures for African swine fever and repealing Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/605 ([1])
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
ELISA	Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay
EU	European Union
EURL	EU Reference laboratory for ASF ([2])
EUVET	EU Veterinary emergency team ([3])
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GF-TADs	Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases
IPT	Immuno-peroxidase test
NAPs	National action plans for wild porcine animals in order to avoid the spread of African swine fever in the Union as laid down in Article 56 and Annex IV of the ASF Regulation
WOAH	World Organisation for Animal Health
PAFF	Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed
PCR	Polymerase chain reaction
SGE on ASF	Standing Group of Experts on African swine fever

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are used for the purpose of these guidelines:

Baiting: means the practice of using limited amounts of feed (e.g. maize) or other attractants to lure wild porcine animals into a particular area (designated area where feed or other attractants are placed), where they can then be hunted or captured.

Culling: means killing of wild porcine animals in order to dispose of the carcass without dressing.

Trapping: means catching wild porcine animals with traps.

Sustained feeding of wild porcine animals: means the practice of providing feed to wild porcine animals in a particular area over an extended period of time with an intention to support the survival or an artificial growth of the population of those animals.

([1]) OJ L 129, 15.4.2021, p. 1.
([2]) https://asf-referencelab.info/asf/en/
([3]) https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-diseases/veterinary-emergency-team_en

INTRODUCTION

The ASF guidelines are developed by the Commission and the Member States and are without prejudice to the applicable Union legislation. Only the Court of Justice of the EU is competent to authoritatively interpret Union law.

This document aims at providing guidance to Member States and/or stakeholders on available tools for the prevention, control and eradication of ASF in response to the epidemiological situation of that disease in the EU and globally.

These ASF guidelines are referred to in ASF Regulation:

— recital 5 (in relation to principles and criteria for geographically defining ASF regionalisation in the EU);

— Article 59(3)(b) (in relation to special information obligations of all Member States concerning ASF);

— point (c) of Annex IV (in relation to minimum requirements for national action plans for wild porcine animals in order to avoid the spread of ASF in the Union).

The ASF guidelines:

— provide for information on the existing EU law provisions;

— illustrate and encourage best practices on the management of ASF;

— provide advice on specific measures (that are not laid down in the EU legislation) on ASF prevention, control and eradication in the Union;

— provide for the principles and criteria for geographically defining ASF regionalisation in the EU.

The ASF guidelines may be tailored to the needs of the Member States or regions, aiming to address different level of risks as defined in the risk assessments ([4]) carried out by each Member State and taking account of the structure of competent veterinary and other authorities, the national legislation and other specificities at national or local level.

The ASF guidelines have been developed and are updated as necessary, based on:

— international standards ([5]);

— scientific assessments (primarily as presented by EFSA ([6]));

— best practices and experiences from the Member States and other countries, and EUVET missions and recommendations;

— other relevant information.

I. MAIN EU LEGISLATION RELATED TO ASF

The most relevant Union legislation related to the prevention, control and eradication of ASF is summarised in the table below:

No	Title	Main aim of the legal act	Remarks
1.	**Regulation (EU) 2016/429** ([7]) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal	Horizontal legal framework on animal health within the Union.	**'Animal Health Law' (AHL)** Link for more information on the Commission's website:

([4]) *EFSA Journal* 2018;16(11):5494
([5]) https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/codes-and-manuals/
([6]) https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/topics/topic/african-swine-fever
([7]) OJ L 84, 31.3.2016, p. 1.

No	Title	Main aim of the legal act	Remarks
	diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health		https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/health/regulation_en Several delegated and implementing acts ([8]) have been adopted by the Commission to make the new rules applicable.
2.	**Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687** ([9]) of 17 December 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and the Council, as regards rules for the prevention and control of certain listed diseases	Provides for measures in case of official suspicion or confirmation of the diseases, establishment of restricted (protection/surveillance zones) and infected zones, prohibitions and conditions for authorised movements from those zones.	**Supplementing rules on disease prevention and control.** Link for more information on the Commission's website: https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/diseases-and-control-measures_en
3.	**Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594** ([10]) of 16 March 2023 laying down special disease control measures for African swine fever and repealing Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/605	Provides for special disease control measures for ASF (EU zoning measures related to ASF), lists at Union level restricted zones I, II and III (Annex I) and restricted zones, which comprise protection and surveillance zones, and infected zones (Annex II), provides for a harmonised biosecurity measures for certain establishments (Annex III) and minimum requirements for the NAPs (Annex IV).	**Special ASF control measures (Union's ASF zoning measures).** Link for more information on the Commission's website: https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/control-measures/asf_en

II. **KEPT PORCINE ANIMALS**

1. **General**

The measures that have to be taken to prevent, control and eradicate ASF in kept porcine animals are laid down in the EU legislation referred to in Section I.

2. **Additional measures for ASF prevention, control and eradication in kept porcine animals**

The ASF guidelines provide for guidance on how to better implement the measures for ASF prevention, control and eradication in kept porcine animals that should be considered where relevant.

([8]) https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-health/animal-health-law/delegated-and-implementing-acts_en
([9]) OJ L 174, 3.6.2020, p. 64.
([10]) OJ L 79, 17.3.2023, p. 65.

2.1. *Awareness raising*

In addition to the general obligations set out in AHL, the ASF Regulation provides for special obligations as follows:

— special information and training obligations in the Member States concerned (Articles 57 and 58 of the ASF Regulation);

— special information obligations in all Member States (Article 59 of the ASF Regulation).

Annex I of the Guidelines provides for key messages and communication strategies tailored to different target audiences. These could provide a baseline for setting up national awareness campaigns in all Member States.

A depository of communication material on ASF used in different countries is also available on the website ([11]) of the SGE on ASF in Europe (GF-TADs initiative).

2.2. *Biosecurity measures*

Regulation (EU) 2016/429 provides for a general concept and definition of biosecurity and contains certain horizontal provisions ([12]) in relation to it.

Article 16(1)(b)(i) and Annex III to the ASF Regulation provides for reinforced biosecurity measures for establishments of kept porcine animals located in restricted zones I, II and III situated in the Member States concerned in the case of movements of certain consignments, authorised by the competent authority in accordance with the ASF Regulation.

The biosecurity measures foreseen in Annex III to the ASF Regulation should be also promoted in all Member States and may be applied in other establishments (which do not have obligations in accordance with the ASF Regulation) of kept porcine animals (except slaughterhouses, where relevant) with the view of ASF prevention, control and eradication.

2.3. *Outdoor keeping of porcine animals in restricted zones II and III*

Due to a risk of ASFV transmission, it is recommended to limit the outdoor keeping of porcine animals at least in restricted zones II and III. Following a risk assessment carried out by the competent authority, the competent authority could decide on the outdoor keeping of porcine animals in restricted zones II and III on a case-by-case basis ([13]) based on:

— the appropriate biosecurity measures (e.g. double fencing or single solid fencing);

— regular implementation of independent and objective biosecurity assessments on-farm or in other establishments (e.g. confined establishments, including zoos) using comprehensive standard protocols;

— a possible assessment or approval, where relevant, of outdoor pig farms based on their biosecurity risk in an official system managed by competent authorities.

2.4. *Regular visits by official veterinarians*

Article 16(1)(a) of the ASF Regulation provides for a frequency of regular visits in establishments subject to authorised movements of certain consignments within and outside restricted zones. Establishments where porcine animals are only kept for own consumption should also be subject to regular visits by official veterinarians based on a risk assessment focused on ASF and carried out by the competent authority of the Member State concerned and in accordance with relevant EU legislation.

2.5. *Risk assessment concerning feed*

The risk from feed is considered to be lower ([14]) than several other pathways (e.g. contact with infected live animals and swill feeding). While EFSA identifies some types of feed, which may present a risk for transferring ASF to a pig establishment, particularly in regions where wild porcine animal contamination is present, other risk pathways are more likely to require risk management, such as moving live domestic pigs, swill feeding with products of porcine origin or allowing contact between wild porcine and kept porcine animals.

([11]) https://rr-europe.woah.org/en/Projects/gf-tads-europe/standing-groups-of-experts-on-african-swine-fever-in-europe/depository-on-african-swine-fever/

([12]) For example, Articles 10, 55, 65 etc.

([13]) *EFSA Journal* 2021;19(6):6639.

([14]) *EFSA Journal* 2021;19(4):6558.

Locally produced hay, straw or grain, harvested from an area where ASF is present in the wild porcine animals, use of farm equipment from a similar area, or providing fresh forage to pigs have been identified as potential sources of ASF for domestic pigs, notably in establishments where porcine animals are kept for own consumption.

Effective traceability systems and biosecurity measures to secure the safety of supplies of feed ingredients should be implemented properly by the feed business operators to address the risks of ASFV transmission.

Where relevant, storage (at temperatures above 0° C) of feed products and enrichment or bedding materials originating from ASF-affected areas before their use will decrease the risk of ASFV survival in the matrix. In specific situations, the competent authority should consider relevant decontamination and storage processes (e.g. storage time, treatment, temperature) leading to a reduction of a potential virus contamination in feed moved from ASF-affected areas to unaffected areas.

If the use of locally harvested grains, grass and straw is considered to represent a risk (following a risk assessment carried out by the competent authority of the Member State concerned) under local prevailing conditions (in particular for establishments where porcine animals are only kept for own consumption), the following measures should be considered by the competent authority:

a) ban on feeding fresh grass or grains ([15]) to kept porcine animals unless it is treated to inactivate ASFV or stored out of reach of wild porcine animals for at least 30 days before use;

b) ban on using straw ([16]) for bedding of kept porcine animals unless it is treated to inactivate ASFV or stored out of reach of wild porcine animals for at least 90 days before use.

2.6. *Sampling and testing*

Requirements for ASF sampling and testing in kept porcine animals are laid down in the EU legislation referred to in Section I.

In case of slaughter of kept porcine animals for own consumption in the same establishment, sampling and testing for ASF should be carried out following the instructions of the competent authority, at least within restricted zones.

The collection of samples, as well as the techniques, validation and interpretation of the diagnostic methods should be carried out in accordance with Article 6 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 ([17]) and, where relevant, should also take account of:

— guidance made available on the website of the EURL ([18]); and

— the Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) ([19]).

III. **WILD PORCINE ANIMALS**

1. **General**

The measures that have to be adopted to prevent, control and eradicate ASF in wild porcine animals are laid down in the EU legislation referred to in Section I.

Wild porcine animals play an important role in spreading and maintaining ASF. Adequate management ([20]) of wild porcine animals as recommended by these Guidelines should take place in:

([15]) Originating from areas where ASF has been reported.
([16]) Originating from areas where ASF has been reported.
([17]) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 of 17 December 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards rules for surveillance, eradication programmes, and disease-free status for certain listed and emerging diseases (OJ L 174, 3.6.2020, p. 211).
([18]) https://asf-referencelab.info/asf/en/
([19]) https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/codes-and-manuals/
([20]) *EFSA Journal* 2018;16(11):5494.

— areas not affected by the disease – focusing on best prevention practices, early detection and preparedness for the possible occurrence of ASF; and

— areas already affected by the disease – aiming to control and eradicate the disease.

The density of wild porcine animals is considered as the most influential risk factor for the occurrence of ASF in those animals. Preventive measures to reduce and stabilise the populations of wild porcine animals, before ASF introduction, are beneficial both in reducing (i) the probability of exposure of the population to ASF and (ii) the efforts needed for potential emergency actions (i.e. less carcass removal) if an ASF incursion were to occur.

A long-term approach of the management of wild porcine animals should be considered by the Member States on a basis of the NAPs.

2. **Additional measures for ASF prevention, control and eradication in wild porcine animals**

The ASF guidelines provide for additional indication and guidance on how to better implement the measures for ASF prevention, control and eradication in wild porcine animals, that should be considered where relevant.

The measures related to ASF prevention, control and eradication could differ (within the limits allowed by the legislation, where relevant) and should be tailor made from area to area or zone. They should be based on:

— the time of the development of the disease in an area or zone (the different phases of the infection can be identified through a continuous system of passive surveillance for early detection of ASF in wild porcine animals coupled with testing of shot wild porcine animals);

— the dynamics of existing population, distribution and densities of wild porcine animals;

— the existence of natural or artificial barriers;

— environmental and climatic differences;

— agricultural practices.

ASF guidelines cover the measures related to ASF prevention, control and eradication in wild porcine animals as detailed in points 4.1 to 4.14 thereof. These measures are summarised in Annex IV to ASF guidelines.

2.1. *Baiting*

Baiting should not represent a source of feeding of wild porcine animals for sustaining their population (e.g. during winter).

The competent authority of the Member State could after carrying out a risk assessment of a possible introduction or spread of ASF and taking into account the possibility of applying additional risk mitigating measures, decide on the amounts of feed allowed for baiting, taking account of the following:

— the epidemiological situation of ASF in a Member State or a zone;

— the knowledge of existing population of wild porcine animals in a Member State or a zone; and

— hunting practices in a Member State or a zone.

2.2. *Biosecurity measures in affected areas and during hunting*

Biosecurity measures related to wild porcine animals should be enhanced in the Member States and follow the Manual developed under the GF-TADs initiative 'African swine fever in wild boar – ecology and biosecurity' ([21]), in particular:

— Chapter 5 'Biosecurity in affected forests'; and

— Chapter 6 'Biosecurity during hunting'.

([21]) https://www.woah.org/app/uploads/2022/07/asf-in-wild-boar-ecology-and-biosecurity-2nd-ed.pdf

Minimum biosecurity requirements for hunters and for all staff searching for and handling the carcasses of wild porcine animals are also provided in Annex II to ASF guidelines.

2.3. *Collection of the key data*

Testing of wild porcine animals for ASF in Member States provides valuable information on the epidemiological situation of ASF and the evolution of the disease. Together with other relevant data, this allows adapting concrete measures for ASF prevention, control and eradication as necessary.

The competent authorities of the Member States should collect and provide epidemiological data on ASF and other relevant information on the disease to EFSA ([22]), where relevant. Such exchange of information allows building a scientific knowledge on ASF ([23]) with a view to risk based approach and management decisions.

2.4. *Cooperation*

The management of wild porcine animals requires cooperation of competent authorities and stakeholders such as forestry management bodies, environmental authorities and hunters. Effective and efficient cooperation is essential for prevention, early detection, control and eradication of ASF. The measures taken in the framework of these guidelines should be compatible with relevant EU and/or national environmental, hunting and veterinary legislation, including nature and biodiversity protection requirements and properly assessed in terms of scientific basis, impact and effectiveness.

A depository of relevant information material on ASF with best practices used in different countries is also available on the website ([24]) of the Standing group of experts of ASF in Europe (GF-TADs initiative).

2.5. *Culling*

Culling should be considered for the reduction of the population of wild porcine animals, in particular in newly infected zones or areas at risk.

2.6. *Establishment of 'white zones'*

ASF control comprises wild porcine population reduction measures, such as pre-emptive culling, or where relevant, hunting, in delineated zones, called 'white zones ([25])'. Previous experiences of certain Member States confirm that the establishment of such white zones might be an effective tool for limiting the spread of the disease in the wild porcine animal population. These 'white zones' could be established in an area which is geographically adjacent to, or within, relevant ASF restricted zone where ASFV is circulating in wild porcine animals. Different measures (e.g. fencing, significant and fast depopulation of wild porcine animals etc.) should be applied in combination in 'white zones' to stop the spread of ASF.

2.7. *Fencing*

Fencing could be used to contain the population of wild porcine animals, where relevant, aiming to prevent, control and eradicate ASF, in particular in the newly infected zones (aiming to eradicate ASF). Fencing should be applied in limited core infected areas, to establish pre-emptive culling of wild porcine animals in a delineated zone ('white zone', to limit or slow down the movement of wild porcine animals from newly infected areas to non- infected areas, and in combination with other measures (e.g. hunting, 'white zones', trapping, etc.) to stop or slow down the spread of ASF. Different types of fences (e.g. solid, electric) might be used, based on the local conditions and epidemiological situation of ASF in particular area and taking account of the following ([26]):

— no electrical fence design can be considered 100 % wild porcine animal proof on a large scale for a prolonged period of time;

([22]) Based on EFSA's requests.
([23]) https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/topics/topic/african-swine-fever
([24]) https://rr-europe.woah.org/en/Projects/gf-tads-europe/standing-groups-of-experts-on-african-swine-fever-in-europe/depository-on-african-swine-fever/
([25]) *EFSA Journal* 2021;18(5):EN-6573.
([26]) *EFSA Journal* 2018;16(7):5344.

— in the past EFSA concluded that there was no evidence that large fences have been effective for the containment of wild porcine animals. Nevertheless, new experiences of the Member States on a fencing (as a measure to limit or stop the spread of ASF) of limited core infected areas could be taken into account;

— several studies on the use of odour repellents to keep away wild porcine animals provided divergent results (several trials indicated in relevant EFSA report could not demonstrate any effect of the repellent on wild porcine animals intrusion or on crop damage).

Natural barriers such as large rivers or straits can be used, where relevant, for demarcation of restricted zones, as they have shown, in certain situations, their effectiveness to reduce, but not completely impede, the movements of wild porcine animals.

2.8. *Hunting*

Hunters should be trained in all Member States to be aware of the risks posed by ASF and on the best practices in case of finding of dead wild porcine animals or any other suspect case of ASF.

Hunting practices should be adapted to the epidemiological evolution of the disease due to their effects on the populations of wild porcine animals. In line with EU and national legislation, additional technical equipment for hunting may be used to reach the objectives set out in these ASF guidelines and in the NAPs.

A close collaboration should be ensured between relevant authorities and stakeholders, as appropriate ([27]), in particular where the management of hunting in the context of ASF is not under the competency of the competent veterinary authority of the Member State.

2.9. *Passive surveillance, including the search of dead wild porcine animals and handling of carcasses* ([28])

Passive surveillance (also when supported by an active search of dead wild porcine animals) is the most effective tool to detect ASF and monitor its spread. Therefore, sampling and testing of carcasses of dead wild porcine animals should be encouraged. Particular attention should be given to the finding of the carcasses in newly infected zones and in the proximity of those zones.

Usually, carcasses, which are found first, do not necessarily represent the first cases of the disease in that area. Therefore, passive surveillance (aiming also to identify and locate the oldest carcasses) and testing of all carcasses should be enhanced, in particular in newly infected zones and in a proximity of those zones.

2.10. *Restricted access to infected zones*

The access to infected zones (in particular in newly infected zones, where the aim is to eradicate ASF as soon as possible) should be restricted in an appropriate manner due to risks of ASF transmission via humans, equipment, vehicles, etc. The competent authority should manage those restrictions based on the risk assessment and taking account specific local conditions and circumstances.

2.11. *Restrictions of sustained feeding*

Sustained feeding of wild porcine animals should be restricted in the Member States aiming to limit or reduce, as appropriate, the survival and the artificial growth of the population of wild porcine animals.

Feeding places or feeding devices for other wild species (e.g. wild ruminants) should not be accessible to wild porcine animals and the feed used thereof should not be attractive for wild porcine animals (e.g. hay).

In specific situations, following a risk assessment, the competent authority could consider to allow a sustained feeding of wild porcine animals for a limited period of time with the purpose of containing wild porcine animals in a newly infected zone where a short-medium aim is to eradicate ASF from that zone.

([27]) *EFSA Journal* 2018;16(11):5494.

([28]) For the purpose of ASF guidelines, the term 'carcass' covers both i) wild porcine animals found dead (including road killed wild porcine animals) and ii) shot wild porcine animals.

2.12. *Sampling and testing*

Sampling and testing of wild porcine animals found dead should be based on:

— the risk assessment carried out by the competent authority; and

— passive surveillance.

Where relevant, found carcasses, culled (e.g. in the newly infected zone or in the 'white zone') and sick wild porcine animals should be tested for ASF by using the PCR. Samples for laboratory testing should be delivered as soon as possible to the laboratory (at least within 72 h from the sampling, except in already restricted zones where the aim is to control ASF).

The following should be taken into account:

— PCR (virus detection) should be the test of choice in areas where ASF is not present and in the ASF restricted zones;

— a positive serological test alone may not indicate the virus circulation;

— ab detection, should not be used for the early detection of ASFV but rather as a tool (as a complementary test to PCR test) to better understand the evolution of ASF epidemiology in certain areas and/or specific situations such as

(i) testing of wild porcine animals in the restricted zone I (bordering infected areas); a seropositive animal could be indicative of an evolving disease situation such as the spread of ASFV outside restricted zones II or III;

(ii) areas where the disease has been present for long periods.

Additional guidelines on the sampling of wild porcine animals and removal of carcasses in Member States concerned (the Member States which are listed or have areas listed in Annex I and II to the ASF Regulation) are provided in Annex III to ASF guidelines.

2.13. *Trapping*

Trapping should be considered as an effective measure to limit or reduce the population of wild porcine animals in the context of ASF in a limited area (e.g. in a 'white zone'), in combination with other measures, aiming to eradicate ASF, in particular in the newly infected zones.

3. **Application of measures in different areas or restricted zones**

Additional measures for ASF prevention, control and eradication in wild porcine animals provided for in point 2 of Chapter III, should be based on the epidemiological situation of ASF and tailored to different areas or restricted zones (as defined in the ASF Regulation) categorised for the purpose of ASF guidelines as follows:

3.1. *areas where ASF is not present and that do not border the restricted zones*;

3.2. *areas, where ASF is not present (including restricted zone I), bordering restricted zones* listed in Annex I (except for the restricted zone I) and II to the ASF Regulation;

3.3. *limited restricted zones corresponding to newly infected zones*, where ASF has been present in wild porcine animals for a relatively short time (e.g. taking account epidemiological development of the disease) and where the main goal in that zone is eradication of ASF in a short-medium term;

3.4. *wide restricted zones corresponding to significant infected zones* (e.g. the whole territory or significant part of it in the Member State), where ASF has been present in wild porcine animals for a relatively long period of time and where the main goal in that zone is control of the disease (since eradication of ASF may not be feasible in a short-medium term).

The general recommendations on different measures for different areas and restricted zones are provided in 3.1 to 3.4 and summarised in Annex IV.

3.1. *Measures that could be taken in areas where ASF is not present and that do not border the restricted zones*

For the purposes of ASF prevention, the following should be considered:

(a) baiting with limited amounts of feed should only be allowed for attracting wild porcine animals for hunting, trapping and, where relevant, for culling;

(b) biosecurity measures during hunting should be promoted and applied;

(c) high density of wild porcine animals may result in an increased risk of ASF occurrence and, if the ASFV is introduced, in a rapid transmission and a long-lasting persistence of ASF in affected areas. Therefore, to ensure efficient ASF preparedness, the competent authorities of the Member States should primarily aim to significantly reduce the density of the population of wild porcine animals, where relevant ([29]) and as appropriate. Hunting should be focused to obtain continuous reduction of the population of wild porcine animals. Targeted hunting (or culling, where relevant) of adult and sub-adult females of wild porcine animals should therefore be encouraged. The overall hunting bag should be balanced between male and females (50 % of each category);

(d) surveillance: sampling should be based on passive surveillance; found carcasses and sick wild porcine animals should be tested for ASF by PCR;

(e) sustained feeding of wild porcine animals should be limited.

3.2. *Measures that could be taken in areas, where ASF is not present (including restricted zone I), bordering restricted zones listed in Annex I and II to the ASF Regulation*

In addition to the measures foreseen in section 3.1, due to an increased ASF risks, additional measures should be implemented aiming to prevent the introduction of ASF, to ensure a rapid detection of ASF, where relevant, and efficient ASF preparedness:

(a) baiting with limited amounts of feed should only be allowed for attracting wild porcine animals for hunting, trapping and, where relevant, for culling;

(b) intensive hunting (driven and individual hunt could be allowed) should be carried out to obtain a reduction of the density of wild porcine animals, which would allow, following a possible occurrence of the infection, containing ASFV or significantly slowing down the spread of ASF;

(c) the long-term management strategy of wild porcine animals should be addressed and encouraged (involving public and private sectors) to reach population reduction goals; the hunters should be considered as part of that strategy;

(d) the competent authority should manage culling, hunting and trapping in collaboration with other relevant authorities and stakeholders;

(e) if relevant, the use of fencing should be considered by competent authority in collaboration with other relevant authorities and stakeholders;

(f) surveillance:

(i) where relevant, active patrolling to find carcasses (preferably by trained staff) should be carried out in order to reinforce passive surveillance and aiming to detect ASF as soon as possible;

(ii) sampling should be based on a risk assessment and on an enhanced passive surveillance; found carcasses and sick wild porcine animals should be tested for ASF by using PCR, where relevant;

(g) all found dead wild porcine animals should be disposed of, as foreseen by the competent authority.

3.3. *Measures that could be taken in newly infected zones to eradicate ASF*

Due to the presence of ASF, the main aim is to contain the disease in a limited area, ensure a precise delineation of an infected zone and implement ASF eradication measures as soon as possible.

([29]) In the newly infected areas the management of wild porcine animals should be carefully considered aiming not to spread ASF further.

Several successful examples ([30]) of ASF eradication in wild porcine animals exist in the EU and should be used as a basis for the development of tailor made measures to eradicate ASF. The following should be taken into account:

(a) baiting should only be allowed for trapping and for culling;

(b) surveillance:

(i) passive surveillance should be used as a basis to define the epidemic phase of the disease (e.g. less carcasses of newly dead wild porcine animals found might indicate the decreasing epidemic phase of ASF);

(ii) in order to reinforce passive surveillance, active patrolling to find carcasses by using trained staff, dogs or drones should be carried out;

(iii) sampling should be based on enhanced passive surveillance: all found carcasses and sick wild porcine animals should be tested for ASF using PCR;

(iv) in addition to testing of all found dead wild porcine animals for ASFV, also hunted or culled wild porcine animals should be tested for ASFV using PCR (including for Ab detection, where relevant);

(c) a ban of hunting (all species) and other activities in the forest should be considered, where relevant, by the competent authority as a measure to prevent the spread of ASF, at least until the decrease of the epidemic phase. The operational expert group ([31]) should assist the competent authority in assessing the epidemiological situation and defining the end of the epidemic phase using the results from the continuous passive surveillance;

(d) driven hunts should not take place, unless duly justified situations when relevant measures (e.g. fencing) have been implemented to prevent wild porcine animals from moving;

(e) all persons searching for and handling carcasses of wild porcine animals should apply biosecurity measures to avoid possible contamination of vehicles, yards and houses;

(f) where relevant, access to the infected zone should be restricted except for the authorised staff or on the basis of derogations granted by the competent authority;

(g) specific training for hunters should be carried out to reduce the probability of further spread of the virus in the environment and outside of the infected zone;

(h) containers to store carcasses of wild porcine animals at least within the infected zone should be ensured, if there is no alternative system for the collection of dead animals; the means for cleaning and disinfection should be available in each storage place; all found dead wild porcine animals should be disposed of, as foreseen by the competent authority;

(i) trapping for culling (and testing afterwards) could be permitted;

(j) culling by trained hunters could be allowed aiming to eradicate (or at least significantly reduce) the population of wild porcine animals, only when the endemic phase has been reached (after the epidemic phase) or other measures (e.g. fencing) have been implemented to prevent wild porcine animals from moving and under the supervision of the competent authority;

(k) no dressing of wild porcine animals (no evisceration) should be carried out; shot wild porcine animals should be put in liquid proof containers or bags to minimise the risk of spreading the fluids of the animal;

(l) fences ([32]) may limit the movement of wild porcine animals thereby contributing to containing or at least slowing the spread of the disease. Fencing should be done in defined areas. Fences should be built in a timely manner (and combined with other measures) to slow down the spread of ASFV and anticipating the epidemic wave of the disease.

([30]) Czechia: https://ec.europa.eu/food/system/files/2019-02/ad_control-measures_asf_presentation-wild-boar-czech-rep.pdf; Belgium: https://ec.europa.eu/food/system/files/2020-11/ad_control-measures_asf_erad-eu-bel.pdf

([31]) As referred to in Article 43 of Regulation (EU) 2016/429 and Article 66 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687.

([32]) EFSA Scientific Report: Epidemiological analyses of African swine fever in the European Union (November 2017 until November 2018).

3.4. *Measures that could be taken in wide infected zones to control ASF*

The main aim is to control ASF in the zone, ensure that the disease is not spreading further to areas where ASF is not present, or, if this is not feasible, limit the speed of spreading of ASFV to other areas as much as possible.

Due to the presence of ASFV in infected zones for a significant time ([33]) and within a significant, wide territory, the following measures to control ASF should be considered:

(a) baiting with limited amounts of feed should only be allowed for attracting wild porcine animals for hunting, trapping, and, where relevant, for culling;

(b) surveillance:

(i) sampling should be based on enhanced passive surveillance: all found carcasses and sick wild porcine animals should be tested for ASF using PCR; hunted or culled wild porcine animals should be tested following the instructions of the competent authority based on the specific epidemiological situation and taking account of relevant EU legislation (such as Articles 51 and 52 of the ASF Regulation);

(ii) active patrolling by trained staff to find carcasses in order to reinforce passive surveillance should be carried out;

(c) hunting and trapping should be focused on the collection of samples for testing;

(d) minimum biosecurity requirements should be applied during hunting, trapping and carcass removal;

(e) culling of wild porcine animals should be carried out by trained hunters;

(f) all found dead wild porcine animals as well as carcases of trapped or hunted wild porcine animals found positive for ASF should be disposed of, as foreseen by the competent authority;

(g) in general, fencing in wide areas should not be considered ([34]). However, in specific situations, strategic fencing could be considered and implemented on the basis of risk assessment carried out by the competent authority.

IV. **PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA FOR GEOGRAPHICALLY DEFINING ASF REGIONALISATION IN THE EU**

The ASF Regulation lays down rules on listing at Union level in Annex I and II of restricted zones following ASF outbreaks. Those restricted zones should be listed in Annex I and II to ASF Regulation taking account of the information provided by the competent authorities of the Member States concerned as regards the disease situation and these Guidelines, as well as the level of risk for the spread of ASF and the overall epidemiological situation of ASF in the Member State concerned and in the neighbouring Member States or third countries, where relevant (as provided for in the recital 5 of the ASF Regulation).

1. *EU legislation*. The rules on listing of restricted zones following ASF outbreaks and the measures applicable in relevant restricted zones are laid down in the EU legislation referred to in chapter I of the ASF Guidelines. The ASF Regulation sets special disease control measures for ASF which are linked with the restricted zones listed in Annex I and II thereto. The ASF Regulation also provides for a regionalisation approach, which applies in addition to the disease control measures laid down in Regulation (EU) 2016/429 and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687. The ASF Regulation lists the restricted zones of Member States affected by outbreaks of ASF or at risk due to their proximity to such outbreaks.

2. *Criteria for geographical demarcation of ASF restricted zones for the listing, amending and delisting of ASF restricted zones from Annex I or II to the ASF Regulation*. ASF restricted zones are differentiated by the epidemiological situation of ASF and the level of risk of spread. They are classed as (i) restricted zones I, II and III, with restricted zone III which indicates the highest level of risk for the spread of ASF and the most dynamic disease situation in kept porcine animals, and,

([33]) For more than 24-36 months taking account the specific situation in that zone.
([34]) Currently, there is no evidence that large fences have been effective for the containment of wild boar (EFSA, doi: 10.2903/j.efsa.2018.5344).

following an outbreak of ASF in a previously disease-free Member State or zone, as (ii) the restricted zones, which comprise protection and surveillance zones (in the case of an outbreak of ASF in kept porcine animals) and the infected zones (in the case of an outbreak of that disease in wild porcine animals). In addition, those restricted zones should be listed, amended or delisted in Annexes I or II to the ASF Regulation taking account, where relevant, of:

2.1. the information and justification provided by the competent authority of the Member State concerned as regards the disease situation and measures undertaken;

2.2. scientifically based principles and criteria for geographically defining regionalisation due to ASF, and the present ASF guidelines;

2.3. the surveillance in place and its results;

2.4. the level of risk for the spread of ASF;

2.5. the overall epidemiological situation of ASF, its evolution and additional risk factors in the Member State concerned and in the neighbouring Member States or third countries;

2.6. the historic and recent presence of ASF in both kept and wild porcine animals as shown through effective surveillance;

2.7. the size of the epidemiological unit of concern, the territorial and geographical continuity with adjacent territories, the typology of biotope present;

2.8. geographical aspects linked to the location of the outbreaks;

2.9. ecological factors (e.g. water ways, forests) and the existence of natural and artificial barriers (e.g. fenced highways or railway or 'white zones');

2.10. presence and distribution of wild porcine animals;

2.11. epidemiology of the disease;

2.12. results of specific epidemiological assessments by EFSA or by the competent authorities;

2.13. historical experience gained on ASF spread;

2.14. administrative divisions, territorial continuity;

2.15. enforceability of the control measures;

2.16. distribution and profile (e.g. type of production (such as outdoor activities)) of establishments of kept porcine animals and the existence of protection and surveillance zones;

2.17. hunting practices and other wildlife management considerations.

3. Based on an analysis of the epidemiological data from Member States affected by ASF virus genotype II, the EFSA puts forward the following findings relevant for regionalisation in its reports ([35]) on ASF:

3.1. the infection continued to spread slowly through the wild porcine populations (the median speed of propagation of ASF infection in certain areas was estimated to be between 8 and 17 km/year ([36]));

3.2. ASF has been introduced into several EU Member States, through two distinct spread processes:

3.2.1. relatively slow and continuous wild porcine-mediated spread through wild porcine populations and meta-populations;

3.2.2. human-mediated translocations leading to the establishment of new ASF clusters distant from areas of previous ASF occurrence.

([35]) https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/topics/topic/african-swine-fever

([36]) The median velocity of the infection in Belgium, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, as estimated using the network analysis, was between 2.9 and 11.7 km/year (Epidemiological analyses of African swine fever in the European Union (November 2018 to October 2019). *EFSA Journal* Volume 18, Issue 1 Jan 2020.

4. *Timeframe of restrictions*. The areas listed in Annex I or II to the ASF Regulation should be maintained under restrictions until the epidemiological situation meets the criteria to amend or delist the ASF restricted zones. The principles of the WOAH Terrestrial Animal Health Code ([37]), along with epidemiological considerations on the disease, provide some guidance on the timing and criteria to be met for recovering the free status of an area restricted due to ASF occurrence.

5. *Main general criteria for the demarcation of ASF restricted zones* listed in Annex I or II to the ASF Regulation. In order to prevent ASF from spreading and to protect the EU internal market and international trade, a cautious and science-based approach should be followed for amending the listed restricted zones. Taking as a baseline the WOAH Terrestrial Animal Health Code and the best knowledge available, the following should be taken into account before amending the listed restricted zones in Annex I or II to the ASF Regulation:

   5.1. reduction or complete deletion of listed restricted zones I and II should not take place during:

      5.1.1. the seasonal peaks of higher disease spread periods described by EFSA;

      5.1.2. during other higher disease spread periods in the proximity of relevant restricted zones;

      5.1.3. negative overall epidemiological situation of ASF in the concerned Member State.

      However, the positive overall epidemiological situation of ASF in the Member State and justifications provided by the competent veterinary authority may be taken into account for the reduction and complete deletion of listed restricted zones also during the seasonal peaks referred to in point 5.1.1.;

   5.2. appropriate surveillance for ASF with favourable results should have been in place in the relevant restricted zone and surrounding areas in the territory of the Member State for sufficient time relevant to the epidemiology of ASF;

   5.3. the overall epidemiological situation of ASF in the country, justifications provided by the competent authority and findings of the Commission audits, where relevant;

   5.4. the competent authority should assess the risks deriving from the modification of restricted zones and the assessment should indicate that the risk of spreading of ASF is negligible as appropriate to relevant restricted zone.

6. *Main specific criteria for reduction or complete deletion of listed restricted zone III and reverting, where relevant, to restricted zone II (in case of a presence of ASFV in wild porcine animals in that zone) or restricted zone I (in case of a presence of ASFV in a close proximity either in kept or wild porcine animals) or to a non-restricted area:*

   6.1. there has been no case of infection with ASFV in that zone during the past three years; this period can be reduced to 12 months when the surveillance in a country or a zone or scientific assessment caried out at EU or national level has demonstrated no evidence of presence or involvement of *Ornithodoros* ticks;

   6.2. in the event of a single or limited ASF outbreaks clustered in space and in time (during a period of 30 days from the first outbreak in that zone) in establishments of kept porcine animals in a sufficiently large area with no ASF outbreak in kept porcine animals for the past 12 months – the three year or 12 months period referred to in point 6.1. can be reduced to 3 months provided that:

      6.2.1. the preliminary cleaning and disinfection and, where relevant, control of insects and rodents, has been performed in accordance with Article 15 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 (immediately after the completion of the measures provided for in Article 12, and where relevant in Article 14 of that Regulation) in all affected establishments;

      6.2.2. the measures referred to in Articles 26 and 41 (visits by the official veterinarians and clinical and when necessary laboratory examinations) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 are implemented; and

([37]) https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/codes-and-manuals/terrestrial-code-online-access/?id=169&L=1&htmfile=chapitre_asf.htm

6.2.3. when the surveillance in a country or a zone or scientific assessment caried out at EU or national level has demonstrated no evidence of presence or involvement of *Ornithodoros* ticks.

7. *Main specific criteria for reduction or complete deletion of listed restricted zone II and reverting to restricted zone I or to a non-restricted area:*

7.1. there have been no ASF outbreaks in wild porcine animals during the past 12 months;

7.2. specific situations ([38]) in relation to the reduction of the 12 months period referred to in point 7.1. might be taken into account based on an overall epidemiological situation of ASF of the Member State and justifications provided by relevant competent authority;

7.3. in case of an overall favourable epidemiological situation in a Member State concerned, there have been demonstration of absence of ASFV circulation in a determined geographical context supported by the favourable conclusions of the implementation of the EFSA Exit Strategy ([39]) (two phase approach: combination of adequate duration of a monitoring period 'Screening Phase' followed by an adequate period of a 'Confirmation Phase').

8. *Reduction or complete deletion of listed restricted zone I* should be based on:

8.1. evaluation of the risks related to ASF;

8.2. there have been no ASF outbreaks in kept or wild porcine animals during the past:

8.2.1. 12 months;

8.2.2. or 3 months, if criterion referred to in point 6.2 is used to revert from restricted zone III with relevant restricted zone I;

8.3. the whole set of epidemiological data in a wider geographical and temporal context, including the epidemiological situation of ASF in bordering restricted zones II and/or III;

8.4. the epidemic phase of ASF in the relevant zone and, where relevant, in the whole Member State; delisting of restricted zone I should not be undertaken in an early stage of the epidemic.

([38]) For example, the last ASF case confirmed is attributed to a PCR-positive decomposed or skeletonised carcass of wild porcine animal indicating death of that animal months before the date of confirmation.

([39]) *EFSA Journal* 2021: Volume 19, Issue 3 Mar 2021.

ANNEX I

Key messages for awareness raising campaigns in Member States

The awareness campaigns should inform, educate and motivate all stakeholders in order to increase surveillance and reporting, enhance prevention practice and prevent further spread and introduction of ASF in new areas. These campaigns should highlight that:

— ASF kills both: kept and wild porcine animals;

— ASF can hamper livelihood of farmers;

— ASF can make local population of wild porcine animals decrease significantly (or even disappear);

— ASF can have a significant impact on hunting in affected areas.

Particular relevance should be given to the reasons and benefits for stakeholders to act, and disadvantages if actions against ASF are not taken. Awareness campaigns should be tailored to reach the intended target audience. Communication should be frequent, multiple communication channels should be properly chosen. Opportunities for audience feedback and evaluation should be created.

Best practices and examples from other countries [1] [2] can be used where necessary.

Awareness campaigns should be periodically reviewed to take into account new information.

Relevance of the disease

ASF is a devastating, usually deadly, infectious disease of kept and wild porcine animals (so called 'domestic pigs' and 'wild boar'); it represents a serious threat to pig farmers worldwide; it does not affect humans nor other species but there is no treatment or vaccine for ASF. The disease can cause severe health impact on farms, disruption of international trade of animals and animal products, and massive economic losses.

The pig sector is one of the most economically significant farming sectors in the EU:

— it represents 8,2 % of the total output of the EU agricultural industry, the highest when compared to other meat sector (year 2022, source DG AGRI);

— pigmeat accounts for 52 % of total EU meat production (year 2022, data source DG AGRI);

— pigmeat is the most exported of all the meats produced in the EU: it represents 61 % of EU total meat exports (year 2022, data source DG AGRI).

During the planning of awareness campaigns the importance of the pig sector at local level and not only at EU level should be highlighted.

Key messages and suggested communication tools for the main target groups

1. **Veterinarians** (public and private)

Why should ASF be stopped?

— ASF represents a serious threat to pig farming;

— there exist no treatments or commercially available effective vaccines for ASF;

— the disease can cause massive economic losses at local, national and EU level;

— the disease causes a substantial amount of suffering among both kept and wild porcine animals.

What veterinary services should do to stop ASF?

— Perform surveillance;

— ensure transparent and prompt reporting of suspicions;

[1] https://rr-europe.woah.org/en/Projects/gf-tads-europe/standing-groups-of-experts-on-african-swine-fever-in-europe/depository-on-african-swine-fever/awareness-material-on-asf/

[2] https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/health/regulatory_committee/presentations_en

— contribute to and monitor awareness campaigns;

— apply biosecurity measures between and during the visits into establishments;

— ensure and advice to enhance biosecurity in establishments.

Suggested communication tools:

— press material, articles, media, etc. in specialised magazines and regional/local media;

— printed material: posters, leaflets, factsheets, etc. could be distributed by targeted mailing to veterinarians' associations;

— organisation of events, seminars training, conferences, etc. for this target;

— online web and social media;

— short videos and animations distributed to targeted audience.

2. **Farmers**

Why should ASF be stopped?

— ASF represents a serious threat to pig farming;

— the disease can cause massive economic losses (direct and indirect);

— ASF can threaten farmer's livelihood.

What farmers should do to stop ASF?

— Report clinical signs and symptoms of ASF or any abnormal mortality;

— participate in voluntary screening programmes;

— make sure that all leftover food is put in sealed waste containers and not feed to kept or wild porcine animals;

— ensure and enhance biosecurity at farm level as agreed with competent authority.

Suggested communication tools:

— press material, articles, media, etc. in specialised magazines and regional/local media and farm advisory services, where relevant;

— print material: posters, leaflets, factsheets, etc. could be distributed by targeted mailing to farmers' associations;

— organisation of events, seminars training, conferences, etc. for this target;

— online web and social media;

— short videos and animations distributed to targeted audience.

3. **Hunters**

Why should ASF be stopped?

— To avoid restriction or ban of hunting, limitations for hunting tourism and significant economic losses to the hunting sector in infected zones and/or neighbouring areas;

— because of ASF the populations of wild porcine animals can decrease significantly or even disappear;

— infected wild porcine animals contaminate the environment making secondary outbreaks in kept porcine animals more likely;

— if ASF is not contained in a limited area, the virus might persist in the environment for a long time with a very difficult exit strategy.

What hunters should do to stop ASF?

— Collaborate with the competent authority in the finding, rapid reporting and safe removal from the environment of carcasses of wild porcine animals;

— clean and disinfect equipment, clothes, vehicle and trophies on-site and always before leaving the restricted zone;

— eviscerate shot wild porcine animals in the designated dressing area of the hunting ground, where relevant;

— contribute to the gradual reduction of the populations of wild porcine animals by decreasing the density of those animals in the areas not yet affected by the disease (including targeted hunting of adult and sub-adult females);

— do not feed wild porcine animals throughout the whole year;

— avoid hunting trips to areas known to be affected by ASF in wild porcine animals.

Suggested communication tools:

— press material, articles, media in specialised magazines and regional/local media;

— printed material: posters, leaflets, factsheets, etc. could be distributed by targeted mailing to hunters' associations, but also in airports, train stations, other transport facilities, including borders and next to the habitats of wild porcine animals (e.g. public parks);

— organisation of events, seminars training, conferences for this target;

— online web and social media;

— short videos and animations distributed to targeted audience.

4. **General public** (including travellers and transporters of feeds/foods)

Why should ASF be stopped?

— To protect animal health and pig producers' livelihood;

— to stop ASF causing massive economic losses;

— to comply with legislation.

What the general public should do to stop ASF?

— Do not introduce live porcine animals or products (fresh pork, refrigerated or frozen pork, sausages, ham salt-cured meat, pig fat) thereof from territories outside the EU;

— do not move pork and other pig products from ASF restricted zones, if it is prohibited by the legislation;

— do not leave food or food waste in areas accessible to kept or wild porcine animals.

Suggested communication tools:

— online web and social media;

— short videos and animations: to be displayed when general public is travelling – airports, train stations and other transport facilities, including borders; next to the habitats of wild porcine animals (e.g. public parks);

— press material, articles, media in travel, food or environmental magazines;

— printed material: posters, leaflets, factsheets: to be distributed in transport facilities, supermarkets or natural parks.

ANNEX II

Biosecurity measures for hunters and for all staff searching for and handling carcasses of wild porcine animals

The competent authority for hunting of wild porcine animals or handling of carcasses thereof in restricted zones or other areas (if competent authority considers that there is a risk of ASF) should consider the biosecurity measures listed below.

(a) An adequate amount of dressing facilities should be available. Where possible, at least one dedicated authorised dressing facility should be available for each hunting ground. In case dressing area is not present in the hunting ground, then the closest hunting ground with a dressing facility should be used. The dressing area should be protected against unauthorised access by people and animals, equipped with water, sufficient effective disinfectants available and waste collection equipment.

(b) For each hunting ground a facility/premise should be equipped with refrigerator (or procedures reaching equivalent results in terms of keeping the carcass until laboratory results are available).

(c) Hunted wild porcine animals should remain in the premises of the hunting ground until tested; only negative carcasses should be released. To achieve this individual identification of carcasses should be required.

(d) Offal from hunted wild porcine animals should not be removed from the animal in the field; shot wild porcine animals should be brought to dedicated authorised dressing facilities limiting loss of body fluids (including blood).

(e) After dressing the wild porcine animal, the place and equipment used (including means of transport) should be washed and disinfected with effective disinfectants.

(f) Animal by-products should be collected and processed in accordance with relevant EU legislation ([1]).

(g) Biosecurity measures should be applied when searching for and handling the carcasses of wild porcine animals to avoid possible contamination of means of transport, yards and houses.

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/food/food/animal-products/eu-rules_en

ANNEX III

Sampling of wild porcine animals and removal of carcasses of wild porcine animals in Member States concerned ([1])

1. ***Sampling of wild porcine animals***

a) Passive surveillance.

The principle of sampling in the whole country (restricted zones and non-restricted areas of the same Member State concerned) should be based on enhanced passive surveillance. On the basis of a risk assessment performed by the competent authority, all found dead and sick wild porcine animals, where relevant, should be tested for ASF using PCR. In restricted zones II and III, sampling in case of a group of wild porcine animals found dead simultaneously on the same spot could be pooled for PCR testing from a representative sample of the group, as provided for by the EURL.

b) Active surveillance.

Additional sampling based on active surveillance from hunted wild porcine animals could be performed, based on instructions from the competent authority. In restricted zones, sampling of all hunted, culled and of found dead/sick wild porcine animals should be conducted (100 % sampling and testing by PCR). The wild porcine animals hunted in restricted zones could be tested additionally for antibodies against ASF virus, where relevant, based on instructions from the competent authority.

c) From hunted wild porcine animals only blood samples are requested (organs could be used for sampling in cases where blood samples are unavailable), as provided for by the EURL.

2. ***Removal of carcasses of wild porcine animals***

a) Carcass searching and safe disposal should be carried out at least in restricted zones and in any area at risk, as defined by the competent authority. The infected carcasses should be detected and safely removed as soon as possible, aiming to contain the disease in a limited area and to start applying relevant ASF control and eradication measures immediately.

b) In case of detection of ASF in unaffected areas, the passive finding of carcasses should be supplemented by active search by professionals in an identified spots ('hotspots') established by the competent authority.

c) The disposal of carcasses should be carried out either by bringing those carcasses to the rendering plant, deep burial or by burning (under supervision of the competent authorities) in line with relevant EU legislation.

d) Disinfection should be carried out, where relevant.

([1]) The Member States which have restricted zones I, II or III listed in Annex I and restricted zones listed in Annex II to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594.

Summary of recommendations related to wild porcine animals as described in the Chapter III

Measures	Epidemiological situation			
	No ASF (preparedness)	No ASF (preparedness)	ASF occurrence (eradication)	ASF endemic (control)
	Areas and restricted zones categorised for the purpose of the guidelines			
	5.1. Areas where ASF is not present and that do not border the restricted zones	5.2. Areas, where ASF is not present (including restricted zone I), bordering restricted zones	5.3. Limited restricted zones corresponding to newly infected zones	5.4. Wide restricted zones corresponding to significant infected zones
4.1. Baiting	Limited, for hunting, trapping and, where relevant, for culling		Limited, for trapping and culling	Limited, for hunting, trapping and, where relevant, for culling
4.2. Biosecurity measures	Biosecurity measures during, where relevant, hunting, trapping and culling of wild porcine animals should be enhanced, promoted and sustained			
4.3. Collection of the key data	Wild porcine animals found dead sampled and tested	On the basis of risk assessment: wild porcine animals found dead sampled and tested and hunted wild porcine animals tested for ASF virus detection. All carcasses tested if the risk evaluated is high.	All wild porcine animals found dead and culled: sampled and tested All hunted wild porcine animals tested	All wild porcine animals found dead and culled: sampled and tested Hunted wild porcine animals tested on a basis of the risk assessment and in accordance with ASF Regulation
4.4. Cooperation	Effective and efficient cooperation of competent authorities and stakeholders (such as forestry management bodies, environmental authorities and hunters) is essential for prevention, early detection, control and eradication of ASF			
4.5. Culling	Up to the competent authority; culling should be considered for the reduction of the population of wild porcine animals	Up to the competent authority; culling should be considered and promoted for the reduction of the population of wild porcine animals	Culling should be considered to eradicate ASF when the endemic phase has been reached (after the epidemic phase) and under the supervision of the competent authority. In practice no actions should be undertaken until the decreasing of the epidemic curve is consolidated and identified through a continuous system of passive surveillance or other measures to prevent the wild porcine animals from movement have implemented	Up to the competent authority; culling should be considered and promoted for the reduction of the population of wild porcine animals

ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2023/1504/oj

OJ C, 18.12.2023

4.6. Establishment of 'white zone'		Not relevant	Could be considered on a basis of the risk assessment in combination with other measures		Not relevant, but could be considered in specific situations, on a basis of risk assessment and in combination with other measures
4.7. Fencing		Not relevant	Not relevant, but could be considered for keeping delimited small areas to facilitate prevention measures	Relevant for ASF eradication in defined limited core infected areas, if timely and strategically built to slow down the spreading of the disease	Not relevant, but could be considered for keeping delimited small areas to facilitate control measures
4.8. Hunting	Aim	Increase hunting effort to reduce the population	Intensive hunting (maximal hunting effort)	Recommendation of a total ban of hunting activities of all animal species until the epidemic phase has decreased	Should only take place under strict biosecurity measures, where relevant (e.g. for private domestic use of hunters, in order to collect samples for testing, aiming to reduce an overall population of wild porcine animals)
	Degree of effort	Increase hunting bag (quantitative effort)	Driven and individual hunts	Culling only after the epidemic phase has decreased	Culling by trained hunters
	Methods	Target female and sub-adults (qualitative effort) by usual hunting methods	Hunting at the highest level achievable in that area. Private/public involvement to achieve the objective to reduce the population	No driven hunts After epidemic phase has decreased hunting at the highest level achievable in that area. Private/public involvement to achieve the objective to reduce the population	Hunting under strict biosecurity measures to collect samples for testing
4.9. Passive surveillance		Enhanced passive surveillance; wild porcine animals found dead sampled and tested on the basis of a risk assessment	Enhanced passive surveillance; active patrolling to find and test dead wild porcine animals	Enhanced passive surveillance; active patrolling to find and test dead wild porcine animals and to remove/dispose of the carcass	Enhanced passive surveillance; active patrolling to find and test dead wild porcine animals and to remove/dispose of the carcass

ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2023/1504/oj

4.10. Restricted access	Not relevant	Not relevant	The access to infected zones should be restricted as much as possible due to risks of ASF transmission via humans, equipment, vehicles, etc.	Not relevant, but could be considered in specific situations
4.11. Restrictions of sustained feeding	Should be restricted and should not take place		In specific situations, following a risk assessment, the competent authority could consider to allow a sustained feeding of wild porcine animals for a limited period of time with the purpose of containing wild porcine animals in a newly infected zone where a short-medium aim is to eradicate ASF from that zone	Should be restricted and should not take place
4.12. Sampling and testing	PCR tests	PCR tests Ab detection could be used in specific situations, such as testing of wild porcine animals in the restricted zone I (a seropositive animal could be indicative of an evolving disease situation such as e spread of ASFV outside restricted zones II or III)	PCR tests	PCR tests Ab detection could be used in specific situations in areas where ASF has been present for long time
4.13. Trapping	Hunting and testing	Hunting and testing	Culling and testing Trapping should be considered as an effective measure to limit or reduce the population of wild porcine animals in the context of ASF in a limited area (e.g. in a 'white zone'), in combination with other measures, aiming to eradicate ASF, in particular in the newly infected zones	Culling and testing