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African Swine Fever in Wild Boar – Russia

Note: Defra Food and Farming Group - International Trade Core Function (FFG-ITCF) monitors outbreaks of high impact diseases around the world. African swine fever (ASF) is among those diseases of major concern.

Disease Report

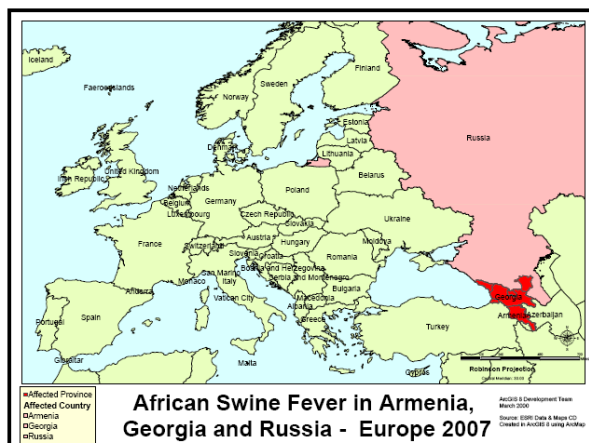
Russia has reported outbreaks of African swine fever (ASF) in wild boar from Chechnya (see map below). Cases were first detected in early November. Wild boars are able to move freely through subalpine grassland along two rivers (Argoun and Shatoy-Argoun) that flow across the Russia-Georgia border (OIE, 2007).



Situation Assessment

Russia is not on the EU list of Third countries allowed to export live pigs or pig meat products to the EU (and UK). Therefore, no legal imports are allowed.

The initial confirmation of ASF in the Caucasus region was in domestic pigs in Georgia in June. The outbreaks continued to be reported across the country (see <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/monitoring/pdf/asf-georgia060607.pdf>).



ASF was then reported from Armenia in August where it affected free range village and farmed domestic pigs in the north of the country. The possibility of the introduction of ASF into wild boar populations in the mountainous Caucasus region and potential for further spread in the region (see map above right) was considered in our previous preliminary outbreak assessment (see <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/monitoring/pdf/asf-armenia300807.pdf> and adjacent map).

Conclusion

On the basis of the current epidemiological developments in Russia it is considered that these events still present an overall low likelihood of the introduction of ASF virus to the UK from the currently affected areas of Russia, as well as Georgia and Armenia.

The likelihood of introduction by legal trade in susceptible livestock or products is considered negligible because EU (and UK) rules prohibit imports of susceptible animals and their products from Russia.

The likelihood of the introduction of the virus by illegal imports is difficult to estimate. This again emphasises the importance of ensuring appropriate disposal of international catering waste, having vigilant enforcement agencies at the borders and the current prohibition of swill feeding in the UK.

FFG-ITCF does not intend to carry out and publish a full risk assessment but will continue to monitor the situation.

References

OIE. (2007). RUS 04-12-07 OIE Alert Message. African swine fever, Russia. Received by e-mail 06/12/2007.