



Ref: VITT1200/CSF-SLOVAKIA

CLASSICAL SWINE FEVER

IN

SLOVAKIA

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Summary

An outbreak of classical swine fever (CSF) occurred on 19 November 2003 in a commercial pig breeding herd located in the Prievidza district, (central Slovakia). The outbreak involved two holdings with the same owner. The herd was depopulated.

The spread of the disease was attributed to direct and indirect contact between the affected farms. The affected herd is a closed herd and no movement is allowed into the herd. Meat produced from pigs from this farm was placed on the local market only. No meat was exported to Member States or Third Countries.

The outbreak occurred in where CSF is known to occur in wild boar population. The Slovakian authorities have implemented EU CSF control measures. The European Commission considered that no additional measures are warranted at this time.

An outbreak of ND disease in any Accession State is of concern. However, the Veterinary Directorate considers that at present the risk of CSF spread from this outbreak to UK via legal trade is negligible.

1. CLASSICAL SWINE FEVER – SLOVAKIA

1.1 Disease Report

On 24 November 2003, the Slovakian authorities notified^{1,2} that an outbreak of classical swine fever (CSF) had occurred in a commercial pig operation located in the Prievidza district (central part of Slovakia) (Fig.1). The outbreak involved two holdings, a breeding holding (Nitrica) and a fattening unit on a separate holding (Dolne Vestenice).



Fig.1. Slovakia – location of CSF outbreak in pigs (November, 2003)

Clinical disease (refer to Annex 2 – fact sheet) was suspected by the Slovakian authorities on 18 November 2003. This was confirmed by laboratory testing on 19 November 2003. The limited information available indicated that a single pig herd (~ 4000 pigs) was affected resulting in 670 clinical cases. Thirty of these had died, while the remaining pigs were to be destroyed on 24 November 2003.

Epidemiological investigation suggested that the disease was possibly introduced on one of the holdings on 10 October 2003. Direct and indirect contact is believed to have caused the disease spread between the affected farms. The affected herd is closed and no introductions of pigs into the herd have occurred during the past six months. The only stock movement was the transfer of piglets to the fattening unit in Dolne Vestenice two months ago.

¹ OIE, (2003). OIE Alert messages. Received by e-mail from oe-info-web@oie.int on 24 November 2004.

² European Commission, (2003). Animal Disease Notification System. Primary disease notification, 24 November 2003.

The Slovakian authorities report that there is no indication that the feeding of swill is practised on the affected holdings. Meat from the slaughter of fattened pigs from this farm was only sold on the local market.

No meat was exported to Member States or Third Countries. The affected region is within the known infected area where CSF is present in wild boar. This area is subject to EU rules (refer to section 3) and the Commission considers that no further measures seem appropriate at this time³.

2.2 Legal trade - current information

2.2.1 Live pigs

Electronic records indicate that there have been no imports of live pigs from Slovakia for the past eleven months.

2.2.2 Germplasm

Electronic records indicate that there have been no imports of pig germplasm from Slovakia for the past eleven months.

2.2.3 Meat/meat products

The importation of pig meat and pig meat products is subject to EU rules. The affected area is within an area from where the EU has banned the export of pig meat and pig meat products because of the presence of CSF in wild boar.

2.3 Illegal imports

Personal imports from Slovakia are allowed for personal consumption. The illegal animal products seizure (ILAPS) database records three confiscations of products (~ 5kg in total)(unspecified) over the past eleven months.

3. RESTRICTIONS IN PLACE

3.1 Situation in Slovakia

The Slovakian authorities have reported that routine CSF surveillance of domestic pigs and wild boar population is carried out. Vaccination against CSF has not been practiced since December 2000⁴. Slovakia reported a case of CSF in the wild boar population in 2002⁵.

³ European Commission, (2003). European Commission Health & Consumer Directorate-General. Outbreak of classical swine fever in domestic pigs in the Slovak Republic. Brussels, SANCO/E2/AL/rd(03)D/522590, CSF-Slovak 01, 24 November 2003.

⁴ OIE, (2001). World Animal Health in 2001. Part 1. Office International des Epizooties. Paris, France.

⁵OIE, (2003). OIE HANDISTATUS II. Retrieved on 24 November 2003 from the World Wide Web: http://www.oie.int/hs2/zi_pays.asp?c_pays=175

The Slovakian authorities have confirmed that the disease control measures (restricted and surveillance zone) for this outbreak have been applied in line with EU rules (for an outline, refer to section 3, para 3.2).

3.2 European Legislation - CSF

3.2.1 Summary

In the case of CSF, EU rules prohibit the export of fresh pig meat and meat products from defined areas (i.e. the protection and surveillance zones around infected domestic pig holdings). Meat products may be allowed for export provided the meat has been heat treated. Other EU rules govern trade in live pigs, pig semen, embryos and ova from affected countries. Slovakia is not on the list of countries from which porcine semen may be imported into the EU.

3.2.1 Detail

Refer to Annex 1

4. RISK ASSESSMENT FOR THE UK

Based on current information on the outbreak of CSF in Slovakia, the Veterinary Directorate presently considers that with regard to:

4.1 Legal trade in:

4.1.1 Live pigs

- The risk is negligible from legal trade as there were no imports of live pigs from Slovakia for the past eleven months.
- Current EU legislation does not allow any trade in live pigs from the Slovakia into the European Community.

4.1.2 Germplasm

- The risk is negligible as control measures under EU rules and the IETS manual prevent exports of germplasm obtained from animals at risk of infection,
- The risk is negligible, because no pig embryos and ova were imported from Slovakia for the past eleven months,
- The risk is negligible because no pig semen was imported from Slovakia for the past eleven months.

4.1.3 Pig meat and pigmeat products

- The risk from legal trade is negligible as the affected part of Slovakia has been subject to EU restrictions since 13 October 2003 .
- EU rules for CSF control prevent exports of meat/meat products from pigs that are subject to control measures in protection or surveillance zone.

4.2 Illegal trade

- Illegal movements of meat/meat products may pose a background risk for the introduction of the disease,
- This type of risk is difficult to qualify, however, it appears that the risk remains unchanged given the history of sporadic outbreaks of CSF in domestic pigs and the disease presence in the wild boar population in Slovakia.

5. CONCLUSION

The initial information indicates that this outbreak is confined to a single closed pig herd in a province of Slovakia that is already subject to restrictions under EU rules. The Slovakian authorities reported that the relevant EU CSF control measures have been implemented.

The risk of CSF spread from this outbreak via movement of live pigs, pig germplasm, pig meat and pig meat products is considered to be negligible due to the implementation of EU rules.

The Veterinary Directorate will continue to monitor the situation and will re-assess the hazard in the light of any new information received.

Slovakia has applied EU controls in the protection and surveillance zone around the affected holding. At present, it is considered that this outbreak poses a negligible risk to the UK animal health.

Richard Cawthorne
Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer (25/11/03)

Annex 1. CSF – Detailed EU rules

1.1 CSF in domestic pigs

The EU requires Member States to follow Directive 2001/89/EC. Control measures include clinical and laboratory examination, epidemiological investigation, stamping out of infected pigs, including possible contacts and movement restrictions on live pigs/pig meat/fomites within the zone surrounding the farm. The control zones are based on geographical and epidemiological principles and do not take into account the national borders of the Member States.

Following an outbreak in a domestic pig holding, two zones are established: a protection zone of 3km, and a surveillance zone of 10km around the infected holding. The rule also allows for the creation of a buffer zone around the surveillance zone should the situation warrant such measures being implemented. Should there be multiple outbreaks, a regionalised approach is allowed to enable effective control measures to be applied to a defined area in order to prevent disease spread, and to allow trade from areas outside the controlled area.

EU rules prohibit export of pig meat from defined protection and surveillance zones around an infected domestic pig holding. Export of meat products may be allowed subject to specified heat treatment. EU rules govern trade in live pigs, pig semen, embryos and ova from CSF affected Member States.

1.2 CSF in wild boar population

Following the detection of CSF in a wild boar population, EU rules require Member States to take the following measures:

1.2.1 Initial control activities

Initial disease control activities are primarily aimed at the domestic pig holdings within the infected area to prevent the spread of the disease to domestic pigs. An affected Member State is required to:

- a) Establish an expert group comprised of veterinarians, hunters, wildlife biologists and epidemiologists to assist the competent authority in defining boundaries of the infected area, including control measures to be applied within,
- b) Draw a specific eradication plan for the CSF control in wild boar (refer to section 1.2.2) to be approved by the Commission within 90 days following an initial outbreak of CSF.

1.2.2 Approved eradication plan

Subsequent to the initial control measures (refer to 1.2.1), a specific eradication plan for CSF control in wild boar must be agreed with the Commission and other Member States and must include:

- The outcomes of previous activities carried out within the infected zone,
- A defined infected area that is based on the results of an epidemiological investigation related to the geographical distribution of the disease, the feral pig population in the area, and the existence of major natural or artificial obstacles to the movement of feral pigs,
- Activities to determine the number and location of meta-populations of feral pigs in and around the infected area
- Epidemiological investigation and laboratory testing of the feral pig population, including age-stratification,
- Measures to prevent contact between meta-populations of wild pigs, and measures taken to reduce their movement,
- Extensive expert consultation and agencies co-operation, including an information campaign, primarily targeting hunters,
- Safe handling of laboratory samples,
- Safe disposal of dead feral pigs.

1.2.3 Current protection measures

Eradication plans have been agreed for parts of Germany, France, Belgium and the whole of Luxembourg.

A specific safeguard decision requires Member States with areas subject to wild boar control measures to ensure that no domestic pigs are exported, unless they originate outside the specified restricted areas and come from a holding where no pigs from the specified restricted areas have been introduced during the 30-day period prior the despatch of the consignment.

Meanwhile, the affected Member states must also ensure the following controls are applied to pig holdings located in the specified restricted areas pending approval of the eradication plan in wild boar:

- Effective isolation of domestic pigs from feral pigs (e.g. prevention of physical contact and contact with waste),
- Implementation of biosecurity measures including cleaning and disinfection of pig holdings,
- Application of hygienic measures, including a possibility of temporary ban on specified movements with regard to people who may have been in contact with feral pigs,
- Laboratory testing of all dead pigs for the presence of CSF virus,

- Prohibition of bringing into a pig holding of any part of any feral pig, or equipment that have been in contact with wild pigs,

Annex 2. Classical swine fever – Fact sheet

2.1 Definition

Classical swine fever (CSF) (syn. Hog cholera, European swine fever) is an OIE List A disease. It is a highly contagious viral disease of pigs, generally resulting in high morbidity and mortality.

2.2 Which animals are susceptible and what is the outcome?

The only susceptible animals are domestic and wild pigs. The disease is fatal in most cases, particularly in its acute phase.

Young pigs are more severely affected than older pigs. Mortality rates in young pigs may reach 90%.

2.3 The disease

2.3.1 The virus

CSF virus is an RNA virus that belongs to the genus *Pestivirus*, family *Flaviviridae*. The virus is related to the bovine diarrhoea virus (BVD) and the border disease (BD) virus of sheep.

While relatively stable in excretions and fresh meat products (i.e. ham, salami, salami type products), the virus is readily destroyed by heat, detergent, lipid solvent, and common disinfectants.

2.3.2 Worldwide distribution

The disease was first observed in the USA at the beginning of 19th century. By the end of 20th century, the disease remains widespread in many parts of the world (Fig.1).

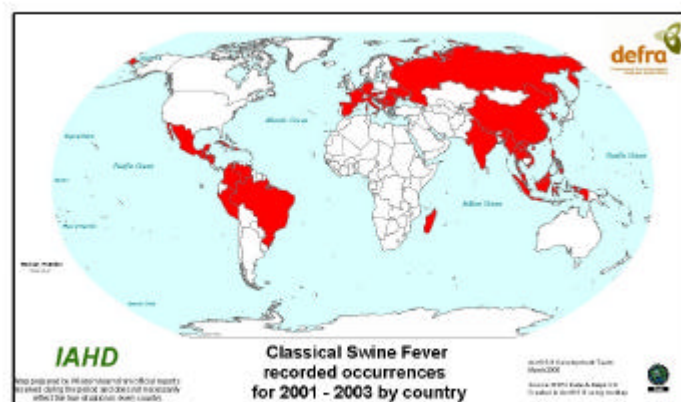


Fig.1. Classical swine fever – World situation (2001/2003)

2.3.3 What are the signs?^{6,7}

Two forms of the disease are recognised: acute and chronic. Regardless of the disease form, the animals are viraemic as long as they show clinical signs. Death may occur within 2-3 weeks after infection (acute form) or up to three months (chronic course). The incubation period for CSF is variable but is usually between five and ten days. In the acute form pigs develop a high temperature (40.5°C), then become dull and go off their food. Other symptoms seen can vary considerably, but may include some or all of the following:

- Constipation followed by diarrhoea
- Gummed-up eyes
- Coughing
- Blotchy discolouration of the skin
- Abortion, still births and weak litters
- Weakness of hindquarters
- Nervous signs including convulsions and tremors in new born piglets.

2.3.4 How is it spread?

The primary disease transmission route is ingestion of material containing the viable virus. The movement of infected pigs is a common method of spreading this disease. Apparently healthy pigs may be incubating disease and recovered pigs can excrete the virus for long periods of time. The virus can exist outside the pig for a long time and would require thorough cleaning and disinfection to be inactivated. The movement of contaminated vehicles, people, clothing, footwear and equipment can also spread disease.

The virus may also be present in wild boar populations, and in some areas of Europe the disease in wild boar poses a constant threat to domestic pigs.

2.3.5 Public health – can people contract the disease?

There are no circumstantial or published literature data to suggest that people may be susceptible to the disease.

2.4 Disease Control measures

EU control measures for dealing with CSF are based on slaughter of infected pigs and various movement controls. EU rules includes provision for vaccination of domestic pigs, ideally with a marker vaccine to allow veterinary authorities to separately identify a vaccinated pig from an infected one. However, no such marker vaccine is currently available, although some drug companies are researching this area. If current vaccines were used to control the spread of disease then any vaccinated pig would be required to be slaughtered because pigs may remain infectious indefinitely. CSF controls include, among other control measures, permissive vaccination for CSF in wild boar as part of a wildlife disease control strategy.

⁶ Extract from: Moening, V. (2000). Introduction to classical swine fever: virus, disease and control policy. *Veterinary Microbiology*, 73, 93-102

⁷ Extract from: DEFRA (2003). Classical swine fever. Retrieved on 15 August 2003 from the World Wide Web: <http://defraweb/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/classicalsf.htm>