



submitted for obtaining EU financial contribution

Annex I.c: Programme for the control and eradication of classical swine fever or African swine fever

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- 6) You are invited to submit your programmes in English.

Document version number: 2022 1.0

Member state : BELGIQUE-BELGIE

Disease African Swine Fever

Species : Domestic pigs and wild boar

This program is multi annual :

Request of Union co-financing from beginning :

First year of implementation of the programme described in this document:

1. Contact data

Name	Phone
Email	Your job type within the CA :

Submission Date	Submission Number
Tuesday, December 06, 2022 16:08:50	1670339331017-19141



2. *Historical data on the epidemiological evolution of the disease*

Provide a concise description of the following indicators :

- *Number of serologically positive domestic pigs compared to previous year*
- *Number of virologically positive domestic pigs compared to previous year*
- *Number of serologically positive wild boar/feral pigs compared to previous year*
- *Number of virologically positive wild boar/feral pigs compared to previous year*
- *An assessment of the evolution of the indicators along the years is requested as well as obstacles and constraints identified that hamper the progress of eradication.*

(max. 32000 chars) :

1. Wild boar:

In September 2018, African swine fever (ASF) was for the first time reported in wild boar in BE. The infected wild boar were found in the most southern part of BE, in the province of Luxembourg, near the border with France and Luxembourg. Their carcasses had been collected in the framework of the surveillance set up to detect as soon as possible the possible introduction of ASF from the contaminated areas in Eastern Europe.

In 2018 and the first months of 2019, the disease spread rapidly in the wild boar population, resulting in the extension of the infected area. However, due to the measures put into place, the epidemiological situation improved very positively after the spring of 2019. The last ASF positive fresh carcass of a wild boar was found in August 2019. The disease stopped circulating in wild boar by September 2019, as afterwards only traces of ASF virus were found in aged bones coming from 6 animals that died prior to October 2019.

From September 2018 till March 2021, an extensive surveillance and cadaver search and extraction of wild boar in the ASF zones were maintained. Activities were organised to maximally reduce the number of wild boar present. In total, during this period more than 5.200 wild boar were collected in the zones and analysed for ASF. Of this number, 833 turned out to be ASF positive.

BE requested at the end of October 2020 the lifting of the ASF zones. This was approved by the EC and the PAFF committee on 20 November 2020. In addition, the Belgian self-declaration to regain the OIE-status "free of ASF in all suidae" was approved by OIE in December 2020.

In the whole of Belgium, a passive surveillance of the wild boar population has been in place for more than 10 years, destined at detecting any spread or introduction of ASF or CSF as soon as possible. Apart from the 2018-2019 epizootic – with the last old bones were discovered – no ASF has been demonstrated in wild boar in Belgium.

In 2021, the passive surveillance has resulted in the collection and analysis of almost 300 wild boar found dead or involved in traffic accidents. This number is slightly higher than the years prior, due to the general increase of the wild boar population and the particular surveillance on the small remaining wild boar population in the former ASF zones.

2. Domestic pigs

Despite the presence of ASF in wild boar, not a single incursion of the disease was observed in pigs. During the whole of the epizootic, the domestic pig population was intensively monitored. This surveillance has been maintained since in view of the still worrying situation elsewhere in Europe and thus the constant risk of new introductions of ASF in Belgium.

In 2021, in the whole of Belgium the surveillance in pigs put into place has resulted in the analysis of 33.668 pigs of 12.763 holdings (3.183 individual holdings, some of which sent in samples at multiple occasions during the year). This is roughly similar to the years before.

3. Constraints

No particular constraints are expected regarding the execution of the 2023 programme.

The ASF surveillance in wild boar has been implemented since many years. The collaboration between the regional competent authorities for wildlife and the hunters and other forest users has year after year been able to provide sufficiently high numbers of dead wild boar for the surveillance. As authorities keep the vigilance for ASF high in informing the stakeholders of developments of the disease in the EU and their own role in the early detection of the disease, it is therefore expected that also the 2023 ASF surveillance in wild boar will run smoothly.

The same applies regarding the surveillance in domestic pigs. In view of the legal obligation to send in samples when clinical signs, irrespective of ASF, are observed and a treatment is started, it is expected that sufficient analysis will be performed in 2023 to reach the objectives put forward.

3. Description of the submitted programme

Provide a concise description of

- *The programme with its main objective(s). In case of a long time strategy, interim objectives for each year should be specified.*
- *Target population*
- *Main measures : active/passive surveillance in holdings, active/passive surveillance in wild boar-feral pigs, vaccination in holdings, vaccination of wild boars-feral pigs, monitoring efficacy of vaccination, eradication measures*
- *Areas of implementation of the programme*

(max. 32000 chars) :

The program will be applied in the whole of BE. It targets both wild boar and domestic pigs.

The objectives are the following.

- In wild boar, the program aims at collecting and analysing throughout all wild boar territory in the country as many carcasses of suspiciously dead wild boar as possible in order to detect a new introduction of the disease in the Belgian wild boar population as soon as possible. The program therefore focuses on animals found dead in nature in the whole of BE, and in addition in Flanders, where wild boar numbers are much lower than in Wallonia, also on traffic victims (as infected wild boar may show abnormal, less evasive behaviour towards traffic).

- In domestic animals, the program also aims at detecting as soon as reasonably possible an introduction of the disease in the pig herd. This is achieved by investigating suspicious clinical cases on farms reported by veterinarians and by analysing the samples that have to be sent in the framework of the enhanced surveillance programme that focusses on minor clinical problems in pigs that are not immediately indicative of ASF.

1. Wild boar

With regard to wild boar, the competent wild life authorities of Wallonia, Flanders and the Brussels-Capital Region organize a passive surveillance throughout the whole of BE. This surveillance consists in the collection and virological analysis of all wild boar found dead. As the wild boar population in Flanders is small, traffic victims are also added to the tally in this Region.

Each region has its own notification and collection system, that is activated each time a dead animal is notified in nature by hunters, forest workers, wildlife staff, local authorities and other forest users. The collected carcass is autopsied by a first line laboratory and tissue samples are taken for an individual virological analysis with a PCR assay that is performed by the ASF national reference laboratory.

As the sample size of the passive surveillance is influenced by the mortality figures in wild boar, the discovery rate of the carcasses and the reporting willingness to authorities, it is not possible to predict how many dead animals will be found and notified. The figures given in the application are based on the average sample size of previous years.

2. Domestic pigs

In domestic pigs, the surveillance put into place consists in:

- a) a follow up of clinical suspicions,
- b) an enhanced passive surveillance in case of smaller clinical problems.

When dealing with a clinical suspicion in domestic pigs, tissue and blood samples are sent in to the ASF national reference laboratory for an urgent virological and serological analysis.

The enhanced surveillance obliges a farmer noticing disease in his pigs to invite his veterinarian for a clinical check. No treatment can be carried out if no dead pig or 3 blood samples are submitted to the first line laboratories ARSIA or DGZ to exclude ASF through a PCR analysis. The blood samples are analysed at the level of the first line laboratories. Where possible, they are pooled up to maximum 9 samples to reduce the costs of the programme. Tissue samples are always analysed individually by the ASF national reference laboratory.

As the bulk of the programme consists in examining minor clinical problems that are not particularly indicative for ASF, factors influencing the number of samples sent in are e.g. the general disease situation in the pig herd, the willingness to send in samples and the choice of the vet for either 3 blood samples or one dead animal. It is thus not possible to predict the exact sample size for 2023. The figures given in the application are based on the size observed since September 2018, when the enhanced surveillance was launched following the discovery of ASF in wild boar.

4. Measures of the submitted programme

4.1 Organisation, supervision and role of all stakeholders involved in the programme

Describe

- The competent authorities (CA) involved in the implementation of the programme and their responsibilities
- Other stakeholders involved in the implementation of the programme, their role and their communication channels with the CA.

(max. 32000 chars):

Different stakeholders are involved in the management and prevention of ASF in BE, as domestic pigs are a federal competence and wildlife is the competence of the 3 Regions. The main actors are the following.

1. FASFC

The Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC) is the federal body responsible for controls in the food chain in BE. It is the sole competent authority for the control of animal diseases in domestic stock, thus also of ASF in pigs. The FASFC develops and implements all ASF measures and surveillance regarding domestic pigs and the food chain, in casu the measures taken in the pig sector to prevent the spread of ASF to farms, the enhanced surveillance introduced in domestic pigs and the measures taken in game establishments to deal with the carcasses of wild boar shot at hunting activities. The FASFC has 9 Local Control Units (LCU) that are the Agency's field branches. The LCU are responsible for implementing and controlling all measures at the level of the pig farms.

2. The regional authorities for wildlife management

Wallonia, Flanders and Brussels-Capital Region are on their respective territories responsible for all matters relating to wildlife and nature and environmental management in general. All necessary control and prevention measures for wild boar, including hunting measures, and wild boar surveillance are implemented at their level. The Walloon Nature and Forestry Department (DNF, Département Nature et Forêt), the Flemish Agency for Nature and Forest (ANB, Agentschap Natuur en Bos) and Brussels Environment (LB, Leefmilieu Brussel) are the departments responsible for wildlife management and monitoring.

3. Laboratories

Sciensano is the national reference laboratory for ASF approved by the EU. It is responsible for the analysis and diagnosis for ASF in wild boar and pigs. Only the results of analyses carried out by Sciensano can officially confirm or refute an ASF contamination. In addition, the FASFC has designated two laboratories as first line laboratories: ARSIA in Wallonia and DGZ in Flanders. Their activities include, among others:

- the collection, post-mortem examination and sampling of dead pigs;
- the collection and preparation of samples to be analysed by Sciensano;
- the first-line virological analyses of the samples taken in the pig sector in the framework of the compulsory enhanced surveillance.

DGZ is also responsible for the sampling in the framework of the passive surveillance in dead wild boar put into place by Flanders.

4. Réseau de Surveillance Sanitaire de la Faune Sauvage (RSSFS)

The Wildlife Health Surveillance Network, part of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Liège, is the body responsible for wildlife health monitoring on behalf of the Walloon Region. It has been organizing the monitoring in wild boar and other game in Wallonia since 2004. In the context of the

control of ASF, the RSSFS is called upon for collecting and sampling the dead wild boar notified in Wallonia. It also plays an important role in training and raising awareness for ASF among official staff and hunters.

5. Hunting organizations

Hunters play an important role in the surveillance of ASF as they are the main users of the wild boar territories. Hunting is a regional competence. Hunting of wild boar is only allowed in Flanders and Wallonia, as all hunting has been prohibited since 1991 in the Brussels-Capital Region. Both regions organize the hunting in similar ways.

- Wallonia is subdivided into 49 territorial units, each corresponding to a hunting council (CC, conseil cynégétique). These CCs are non-profit organizations whose purpose is to coordinate hunting management at the local level. The CCs therefore constitute an essential information channel towards holders of hunting rights in Wallonia and are able to coordinate any action relating to the management of game within their respective territories.

- In Flanders, hunting territories are grouped into so-called wildlife management units (WBE, wilbbeheereenheden). A WBE is a voluntary association of at least 5 hunting territories with at least 1000 ha of land. It can only be made up of hunters, but must always invite to its general assembly representatives of ecological associations, farmers and foresters. These wildlife management units aim, in consultation with all parties concerned, to maintain and/or develop ecological wildlife through local wildlife management plans.

6. Veterinarians

Approved veterinarians are important partners, in particular of the FASFC.

They are an essential link between the authority and farm animal keepers, they carry out the first risk analysis when a suspicion arises, they carry out all kinds of tasks and monitoring activities on behalf of the Agency, and are better placed than the FASFC itself to inform farmers about the disease and the measures involved.

Regarding wild boar, veterinarians are assigned by the Regional networks to sample any carcass sent in.

4.2 Description and demarcation of the geographical and administrative areas in which the programme is to be implemented

Describe the name and surface of the areas where the following activities are implemented (if administrative units are not used, describe the natural or artificial boundaries used to determine the geographical areas) :

- 1) *Surveillance in holdings/wild boar*
- 2) *Vaccination in holdings/wild boar and monitoring the efficacy of the vaccination*
- 3) *Describe risk areas if they have been defined*
- 4) *Describe WAMTA (ASF programme)*

Add maps.

(max. 32000 chars) :

1. Surveillance zones

As explained above, no more European zoning has been in place since the end of November 2020. The whole of BE is considered as one zone regarding domestic pigs. Regarding the management of wild boar, each of the 3 regions is responsible for its territory.

2. Risk areas

Regarding pigs, the highest densities of pig farms in BE are found in the north and the northwest of the country, in Flanders and in particular in the provinces of West-Vlaanderen, Oost-Vlaanderen, Antwerpen and Limburg.

Regarding wild boar:

- As no wild boar are present in the provinces of West-Vlaanderen and Oost-Vlaanderen, nor in large parts of Antwerpen, these provinces are not considered as particular risk areas. They are however considered as high density areas for domestic pigs and thus as high risk areas once ASF should be introduced in the pig herd.
- Relatively high numbers of wild boar are present in the province of Limburg. As the control strategy applied in 2018-2019 in infected wild boar is more difficult to implement in this province and a high number of big sized commercial pig farms is present, Limburg is a particular risk should ASF be introduced here, either in pigs or in wild boar.
- High numbers of wild boar are present almost everywhere in Wallonia. Although the south of BE has the smallest number of holdings and on average much smaller holdings than the north of BE, it poses a particular risk should ASF be introduced again and start spreading. In particular the numerous pig farms with outdoor rearing of pigs are a difficult to manage risk category.

3. Surveillance in domestic pigs

- All pig holdings in BE have to be visited by the farm veterinarian 3 times a year. The results of each visit are reported in the central animal database Sanitel.
- In addition, since 2021, all pig farms have to perform once a year a biosecurity check based on an online app made available by FASFC.

4. WAMTA

In view of the current favourable epidemiological situation in BE, no specific WAMTA has been defined.

4.3 Description of the measures of the programme

4.3.1 Notification of the disease

(max. 32000 chars):

1. Wild boar

Any wild boar found dead anywhere in BE is automatically considered to be a suspicion of ASF. As this surveillance depends on the notification of dead animals, the regional authorities do an important effort to keep all stakeholders informed about the situation on ASF in the EU and about their role in detecting the disease as early as possible. This information is widely spread in the hunting and forestry community in BE through different channels (e.g. websites, general hunting organizations, regional hunting authorities, the local hunting grounds). Hunters and people active in the forests are requested to notify findings of dead wild boar to authorities.

In order to facilitate the collection and sampling of dead wild boar reported, authorities have organized specific networks to this purpose.

- In Wallonia, anyone finding a dead wild boar can contact 24/7 the call centre (telephone number 1718) operated by the Walloon Public Service. All notifications received are immediately forwarded to the

forestry administration that will do the necessary to collect the carcass for a sampling by the RSSFS network.

- In Flanders, a notification of a dead wild boar to authorities is forwarded to one of the selected refuge centres that will collect the carcass and contact DGZ who will then take the samples necessary to confirm/rule out the disease.

- In Brussels, a dead wild boar is collected by Brussels Environment that will also perform the necessary sampling.

2. Domestic pigs

According to the Royal Decree of 19 Mar 2004 on the control of African swine fever, a farmer observing a clinical suspicion of ASF in his pigs is obliged to have all his pigs immediately examined by the farm vet. The farm vet is obliged to report the suspicion to the FASFC immediately. The obligation to report a suspicion of ASF is further mandatory for everybody having pigs or working in the pig industry (e.g. vets, pig transporters, slaughterhouse staff, inseminators, ...) and for all laboratories.

In addition, since the introduction of ASF in wild boar in 2018, an enhanced surveillance has been made mandatory on pig farms. Since, a farmer noticing disease in his pigs has to invite his vet for a clinical check. No treatment can be carried out unless a dead pig or 3 blood samples have been submitted to the first line labs ARSIA or DGZ to exclude ASF.

3. Notification to the EC

The FASFC reports all lab confirmed outbreaks and cases of ASF to the EC through the ADIS.

4.3.2 Target animals and animal population

Describe

- *The pig industry, type and number of farms*
- *Feral pigs-wild boar distribution in the country*
- *Target population*
 - *for surveillance and or vaccination in holdings*
 - *for surveillance and or vaccination in feral pigs/wild boar*

(max. 32000 chars) :

1. Wild boar

Wild boar numbers have been constantly increasing throughout BE in the last decades. In the last 30 years, the species has expanded its range from the south to the northeast and has invaded big parts of the territories involved. The species is now present almost everywhere in Wallonia and in the eastern part of Flanders, in the province of Limburg. It is also present on patches throughout the central part of the country.

The highest densities are recorded in Wallonia with particularly heterogeneous hunting bags in the 49 hunting councils covering the entire region. In 2015-2016, the median estimate based on the hunting bags was 1.46 boar per km², the maximum was 9.92 boar per km². In Flanders, numbers are much lower. In on the Brussels territory, only a small population with a few dozen individuals is present. As no precise figure on the current numbers is known, the population is mainly estimated based on the data of the hunting bags. The obligation to tag a wild boar shot with an official traceability bracelet from the administration makes it possible to obtain information on the number of wild boar killed each year in

Wallonia and Flanders. In addition, the Walloon and Flemish hunting legislation require the production of detailed reports on shooting statistics, distinguishing between age groups and gender. The quality of these reports varies greatly depending on the hunting ground.

Passive surveillance is carried out in all areas where wild boar are present.

2. Domestic pigs

In January 2021 the Belgian pig population had almost 7,000 registered pig farms with a capacity of about 470,000 breeding pig places and about 5,100,000 fattening pig places.

The highest densities of pig farms in BE are found in the north and the northwest of the country, in Flanders and in particular in the provinces of West Flanders, East Flanders, Antwerp and Limburg.

The farms are distributed as follows:

- approximately 50% are holdings (2.1 million places) with only fattening pigs; the majority are holdings with more than 50 pigs, the number of people fattening a few pigs for themselves being a minority;
- about 25% of farms have sows (350,000 places);
- more than 900 keepers keep company pigs; they keep an average two pigs;
- only a small number of farms keep wild boar in captivity; these holdings are considered as domestic pig holdings and the wild boar present must meet the same requirements as conventional pig holdings.

Only some 400 commercial farms keep pigs outdoors, mostly situated in Wallonia.

Sampling is being carried out throughout BE in the context of the enhanced surveillance and the follow up of ASF clinical suspicions.

4.3.3 Identification of animals and registration of holding including detailed reference to relevant Union legislation and its implementation in the Member State for this disease

(max. 32000 chars):

The identification and registration of pigs is described in Royal Decree 1 Jul 2014 establishing a system for the identification and registration of pigs and laying down the conditions for the admission of pig holdings.

1. Registration of holdings

Anybody keeping one or more pigs must register in the central animal database Sanitel. This registration is also compulsory when keeping companion pigs, but not all requirements that apply to bigger pig farms have to be met by smaller holdings:

- Holdings with up to 3 fattening pigs are only required to identify and re-mark their animals, keep a farm register and use movement documents. They also have to appoint a farm veterinarian.
- Holdings with up to 3 pet pigs have no further obligation but registration and to appoint a farm veterinarian. They are not required to (re)identify their animals, nor to keep a holding register or to use movement documents. However, as soon as such keeper breeds or wishes to breed with his pet pigs, the status of the holding changes and the animals are henceforward considered as breeding pigs, with all registration and identification requirements to apply in full.

2. Identification of pigs

At weaning age, each pig must be marked with a herd ear tag from the holding, thus identifying its origin when being moved to another premise. Each time the pig leaves to a new herd, it must be identified by an additional ear tag of the herd of departure. A pig may therefore bear more than one ear tag. When leaving a herd for direct transport to the slaughterhouse, no ear tags are applied, but the herd code is then applied when leaving the farm by means of a hammer stamp or by placing a slaughter clip. This latter is a fireproof identifier on which the herd code is mentioned. A special pair of pliers is required to place a slaughter clip. The use of the hammer stamp is only permitted for pigs of the slaughtering pig category.

The identification and registration rules allow the tracing of pigs throughout the chain, from birth till slaughter.

4.3.4 *Rules of the movement of animals including detailed reference to relevant Union legislation and its implementation in the Member State for this disease*

(max. 32000 chars) :

1. Wild boar

The buying, selling and movement of live wild boar is prohibited in the whole of BE by the relevant hunting legislation of the 3 Regions.

2. Domestic pigs

The movement of domestic pigs outside of the ASF zones is regulated by the following legislation:

- Royal Decree 1 July 2014 establishing a system for the identification and registration of pigs and laying down the conditions for the admission of pig holdings.
- Royal Decree 10 July 2014 on the conditions of transport, collection and marketing of farm animals.

4.3.5 *Surveillance and inspection regime*

Describe

- *The test used, when are to be used and in which animals*
- *Sampling schemes at holding level and at animal level and the criteria to include an animal or a holding in the sampling scheme*
- *Sampling scheme in wild populations*
- *Inspection regime in farms (commercial and backyards)*

(max. 32000 chars) :

1. Laboratories

Sciensano is the ASF national reference laboratory approved by the EU. It is responsible for the analysis and diagnosis for ASF in wild boar and pigs. Only the results of analyses carried out by Sciensano can officially confirm or refute an ASF contamination.

In addition, the FASFC has designated two laboratories as first line laboratories: ARSIA in Wallonia and DGZ in Flanders. Their activities include, among others:

- the collection, post-mortem examination and sampling of dead pigs;
- the collection and preparation of samples to be analysed by Sciensano;

- the first-line virological analyses of the samples taken in the pig sector in the framework of the compulsory enhanced surveillance.

DGZ is also responsible for the sampling in the framework of the passive surveillance in dead wild boar put into place by Flanders.

2. Sampling

In wild boar, the main samples taken are

- spleen, nasal swabs and bones for virological analysis;
- blood for serological analysis.

In domestic pigs, according to the situation the following samples are taken:

- serum samples for serological analysis;
- blood, organ samples (tonsils, kidneys, lung, spleen, lymph nodes) or nasal swabs for virological analysis.

3. Analysis of the samples

All analyses are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the European Diagnostic Manual and the instructions of the European Reference Laboratory.

a. Serological tests

Serological tests allow the detection of antibodies against ASF. Only ELISA tests are available. They are essentially used in domestic pigs in the framework of the active surveillance.

In the event of a positive or doubtful ELISA result, a confirmation test using RT-PCR is required.

b. Virological tests

RT-PCR is the main virological assay that detects sequences of the genome of the ASF virus. It is used as the standard method to detect ASF virus in wild boar (found dead or shot at hunting) and domestic pigs (clinical suspicion or increased surveillance scheme).

As RT-PCR only detects part of the virus genome and not a complete virus, where relevant viral isolation is used to officially confirm the presence of ASF virus.

4. Sampling scheme in wild boar

The sampling of dead wild boar found in the framework of the passive surveillance is done either by designated veterinarians, that work under supervision of the RSSFS (Wallonia) or by veterinarians of DGZ (Flanders, Brussels). The sampling usually takes place either on the spot or at designated sampling sites (e.g. refuge centres, local sites of the authorities, autopsy rooms of the university of Liège). After sampling, the carcasses are collected by Rendac.

5. Sampling scheme in domestic pigs

Sampling is performed by veterinarians, usually the farm veterinarian of the holding involved. All samples are sent to or collected at the veterinary practices by DGZ and ARSIA where the first line serological/virological analysis of blood and/or a necropsy are performed. When confirmation of a positive analysis result or an analysis on tissue samples are needed, samples are sent asap to the reference lab Sciensano.

Samples collected by FASFC's LCU in the framework of clinical suspicions are directly sent to Sciensano.

6. Inspection regime in farms (commercial and backyards)

The Royal Decree of 15 February 1995 on special measures for the epidemiological surveillance and prevention of notifiable pig diseases stipulates that every pig farmer must appoint a veterinarian who will visit the holding three times a year with an interval of at least three months for inspection.

During this visit, the veterinarian checks the health of the animals, the register, the identification and registration and reports his findings into the central animal database Sanitel.

In addition, since 2021, each farm has to perform once a year a compulsory biosecurity check based on an online checklist (based on the Biocheck tool of the University of Ghent) made available by FASFC. The data are collected and stored and are available for control and benchmarking by the FASFC.

4.3.6 Vaccines used and vaccination schemes including detailed reference to relevant Union legislation and its implementation in the Member State for this disease

Describe

- Vaccines to be used in the programme
- In case of feral pigs, type of holdings to be vaccinated
- In case of feral pig-wild boar, bait density to be achieved in each area of the programme
- Sampling scheme and tests used to verify the efficacy of the vaccination

(max. 32000 chars):

Not applicable.

4.3.7 Biosecurity requirements applicable to farms (commercial and backyards) and to hunting grounds.

(max. 32000 chars):

1. Wild boar

In view of the ASF situation, staff of authorities involved and a lot of hunters (through training given by authorities) have undergone biosecurity training given by amongst others the RSSFS. The topic is also strongly promoted by the hunting associations. See e.g. "http://www.favv.be/avp/publicaties/brochures/_documents/Flyer_JAGER_01-10-2018.pdf" for an example of the basic biosecurity that is expected to be applied on all hunting grounds.

2. Domestic pigs

The preventive measures normally applied in BE are set out in the Royal Decree of 18 June 2014 on measures to prevent notifiable pig diseases. This decree describes the minimum biosecurity measures to be respected by pig keepers and other operators in the pig chain. It not only applies to ASF, but also to any other reportable swine disease.

At the level of pig farms, the farmer has to ensure that the following infrastructure and equipment conditions are met:

Standard requirements for the submission of programme for eradication, control and surveillance

- The farm has a concrete loading and unloading area for pigs that can be cleaned and disinfected.
- The holding has a fixed storage place for carcasses that allows an easy and safe collection of carcasses by the rendering company. This storage area has to be cleaned and disinfected after each collection.
- The farm has a hygiene room, separate from the stables. It is equipped with a sink with running water and soap, a foot bath for cleaning and disinfecting boots, and clean boots and overalls, to allow visitors to change before entering the stables.
- The farm has a disinfectant supply and cleaning and disinfection equipment adapted to the needs of the holding, even when regular cleaning and disinfection of the stables is performed by a specialised company. The minimum equipment consist in a high-pressure cleaner and at least 5 litres of an approved disinfectant.

In addition, the farmer ensures that the following operating conditions are met:

- The farm is closed off in such a way that the stables are only accessible after registering with the farmer and after proper use of the hygiene and handwashing airlock.
- Farm buildings have to be closed to access from wild birds.
- An effective vermin control program is implemented.
- Each stable or compartment must be emptied, cleaned and disinfected at least once a year. A compartment may only be repopulated after it has been completely dried after cleaning and disinfection.
- A visitor register is kept.
- Access to the farm is prohibited to any vehicle, person or equipment in the 72 hours following any contact with pigs or a pig holding in a third country or in an ASF risk area.
- Newly introduced pigs in the holding have to be quarantined. If not, the movement of pigs from the holding is prohibited for 4 weeks, except slaughter pigs.
- When filling a compartment or stable of the holding with fattening piglets from another holding, the interval between the arrival of the first and the last pig shall be a maximum of 8 days. Similarly, when filling a compartment of a post-weaning holding with piglets from another holding, the interval shall be a maximum of 3 days.

In order to prevent direct and indirect contact between pigs and wild boar, the following biosecurity measures apply for the whole of BE. These requirements are particularly relevant in areas where wild boar are known to be present:

- The farmer must ensure that no (part of) wild boar found dead or shot are introduced into his farm.
- The farmer shall ensure that contact with pigs from his holding is prohibited to any person who has been in contact with a wild boar in the previous 48 hours.
- The farmer shall ensure that any direct contact between pigs on a holding and wild boar is avoided, either by housing the pigs in buildings that do not allow such contact, or by means of a double fence or a separation of hard materials if pigs in the herd have access to an outdoor grazing area.
- The farmer shall ensure that the equipment and feed used for the pig farm is protected against any contact with feral wild boar. Feed silos have to be protected by a fence to prevent contact with wild boar at all times.
- When wild boar have entered the premise, the farmer informs the FASFC, that will start an investigation to confirm or exclude contamination.

Certain exceptions to these general rules are made for holdings where no more than three pigs are kept for fattening or as pets, where the pigs have been brought in by a personal means of transport, and from which no pigs or pig products are sold or transported. However, a minimum level of biosecurity must also be guaranteed in this type of pig farming, in particular as regards contact with wild boar.

In addition, a series of prevention and biosecurity measures also apply to the pig transport sector:

- A vehicle used for the transport of pigs must be cleaned and disinfected after each transport.
- In addition, any vehicle used for the transport of pigs in a third country or an ASF risk area must be cleaned and disinfected a second time under the supervision of the FASFC after the return to BE.

As mentioned above, the tool Biocheck developed by the University of Ghent is used as an online tool to perform the compulsory yearly biosecurity evaluation of every pig farm in BE. This is a risk-based scoring system that allows the evaluation of the quality of biosafety on a pig farm in a scientific and independent manner. The online application has been developed in collaboration with DGZ/ARSIA. It is aimed at keeping the focus on biosafety high, in order to prevent the introduction of pig diseases in general.

4.3.8 Measures in case of a positive result including detailed reference to relevant Union legislation and its implementation in the Member State for this disease

A description is provided of the measures as regards positive animals and detailed reference to the Union legislation provisions (slaughter, destination of carcasses, use or treatment of animal products, the destruction of all products which could transmit the disease or the treatment of such products to avoid any possible contamination, a procedure for the disinfection of infected holdings, the therapeutic or preventive treatment chosen, a procedure for the restocking with healthy animals of holdings which have been depopulated by slaughter and the creation of a surveillance zone around infected holding). A definition of a suspicion and of a confirmation should be provided, with detailed measures implemented in both situation and how the herd is requalified as free after a positive result.

(max. 32000 chars) :

1. Wild boar

When an animal is found positive for ASF, roughly the same approach will be used as developed and used in the period 2018-2020 to hopefully eradicate the disease again. This includes the immediate delimitation of a restriction zone that will be as soon as possible replaced by the zones I and II. In the zones the full strategy as foreseen by EU legislation and recommendations will be implemented.

2. Domestic pigs

All the measures that are taken following the confirmation of ASF in domestic pigs are described in the Royal Decree of 19 Mar 2004 on the control of ASF. These measures are in line with the measures laid down in the European legislation and comprise:

- the culling of all pigs on the infected farm;
- the pre-emptive culling of pigs on certain contact holdings;
- the delimitation of a 3 and 10 km zone around the infected site with strict measures for all pig farms involved and a ban on the movement of pigs and pig products;
- nationwide measures, including if necessary a 72h standstill, for movement of pigs and certain pig products, ban on gatherings, increased biosecurity measures, transport restrictions.

4.3.9 Description of the slaughtering policy (in ASF programmes). Describe under which circumstances a farm will be slaughtered/culled and, if any, types of preventive slaughtering/culling regimes applied.

(max. 32000 chars) :

1. In case of an outbreak of ASF

When the presence of ASF on a holding is confirmed, the pigs of the outbreak will be slaughtered and disposed of, in accordance with the EU legal requirements.

The methods used are:

- killing with electricity,
- gas euthanasia (using carbon dioxide) for small pigs,
- euthanasia by lethal injection (individual killing of small numbers of pigs).

Samples will be taken from the pigs killed for laboratory examination and epidemiological inquiry.

All carcasses will be disposed of under official supervision in the rendering plant.

2. Slaughtering policy in ASF zones with only virus circulation in wild boar

Although a general pre-emptive culling of all pigs in the zones - as was performed in September 2018 following the detection of ASFV in wild boar - is not ruled out, generally an approach based on an individual risk assessment in each farm is applied: as soon as a pig farm finds itself in an ASF zone, it is immediately checked by the FASFC for compliance with biosecurity measures, and in particular potential contacts with wild boar. A farm that does not meet the strict biosecurity standards imposed by the Belgian legislation must remedy the shortcomings in a short period of time. When the second verification, the biosecurity issues have not yet been resolved, the slaughter or killing of pigs on that holding is imposed and the restocking of the holding is prohibited for the duration of the ASF epizootic. The same applies when the pig keeper is unable to fulfil the obligation of keeping his pigs at all times indoors.

4.3.10 Compensation scheme for owners of slaughtered and killed animals

(max. 32000 chars) :

The Royal Decree of 19 Mar 2004 on the control of ASF provides a compensation from the Sanitary Fund for all pigs killed by authorities during an epizootic of ASF. The same compensation applies to pigs killed in the framework of the slaughtering policy in the ASF zones described in section 4.3.9.

The compensation paid is in line with the market value of the pigs and is set out in compensation tables according to a number of fixed criteria that will guarantee an equitable compensation for all farms involved.

4.3.11 Control on the implementation of the programme and reporting including detailed reference to relevant Union legislation and its implementation in the Member State for this disease

(max. 32000 chars) :

In wild boar, the regional authorities for wildlife - DNF (Wallonia), ANB (Flanders) and BE (Brussels-capital region) - are the responsible entities for surveillance and control.

In domestic pigs the FASFC is responsible for monitoring and controlling the implementation of all measures.

4.3.12 Measures implemented in wild boar (in ASF programmes).

Describe

- *how sustained feeding is avoided.*
- *average amount of food distributed in hunting grounds per month and km²*
- *sampling, collection / delivery and removal of dead wild boar and compensation scheme applied*

(max. 32000 chars) :

1. Sustained feeding of wild boar

Sustained feeding of wild boar has been banned in the whole country.

2. Targeted hunting

As requested by EU, an overall programme to manage wild boar populations was laid down, its objective being the overall reduction of wild boar numbers to acceptable levels. This is achieved by imposing specific hunting bags adapted to the specifics of the place or region involved.

3. Sampling and collecting

See above. No compensation scheme applies for wild boar.

4.3.13 Describe the raising awareness actions to be implemented.

(max. 32000 chars) :

1. To the general public

Communication to the general public is a joint responsibility of the regional authorities and the FASFC. This information has been considerably reinforced since the introduction of ASF in BE.

- The websites of the regional authorities include all relevant information and contain valuable information regarding biosecurity.
- The FASFC website (www.afsca.be), although it mainly informs pig owners and other operators in the food chain, also contains information and documents that are accessible to the general public. This site also refers to the sites of the regional authorities.

2. To hunters, professional users and other forest users

Hunters (federations, hunting councils and local hunters) and forest users are informed by the regional authorities. The means of information are mainly the respective websites of the Regions, brochures and documents made available via these websites and distributed through the channels of the various hunting federations, and information meetings organised with (representatives of) hunters. In recent years, this information sharing has been more intensive in Wallonia as this region was affected by the disease.

The information below illustrates the initiatives developed in Wallonia:

- Hunters have long been informed by various means, including:
 - preventive communication,
 - monthly progress reports on disease progression and associated measures,

- biosafety training,
- cartographic update,
- online surveys,
- information and consultation meetings,
- technical information bulletin.
- Professional forestry workers are kept informed via:
 - letters recalling the measures,
 - monthly sectoral information and consultation meetings, and in particular when specific measures are taken involving them.
- Other forest users are informed via:
 - the installation of posters,
 - the dissemination of information at the level of the provincial government and municipalities, police zones, emergency services, forest operators involved in the area,
 - the publication of a brochure intended for the general public (see above), widely distributed in the municipalities involved in the area, in leisure centres, tourist institutions, etc.

3. To the agents and collaborators of the authorities concerned

The officials of the various authorities concerned are informed through the usual channels of these authorities.

5. *Benefits of the programme*

A description is provided of the benefits of the programme on the economical and animal health points of view.

Describe

- progress expected compared to the situation of the disease in the previous years, in line with the objectives and expected results
- cost efficiency of the programme including management costs

(max. 32000 chars) :

The Belgian 2023 program for ASF is similar to previous programmes. It continues the operational design put into place to free the country again of the ASF virus that was introduced since September 2018 and that was formally eradicated by the end of 2020.

In wild boar, the program aims at preventing the (re)introduction of ASF into to wild boar population and should despite all an introduction happen, at detecting the disease as quickly as possible. This is achieved by informing and sensitizing stakeholders on ASF and by maintaining a strong surveillance and an efficient notification and collecting network.

In domestic pigs, the enhanced surveillance and mandatory laboratory testing when diseased pigs are observed will significantly contribute to the awareness of stakeholders and the early detection of ASF in the pig herd.

The yearly biosecurity checks will help to improve the biosecurity level of pig farms in BE and aims at the same time at improving the awareness in farmers and veterinarians regarding the importance of biosecurity in the reduction of the risk of introduction of ASF or other diseases into the pig farms.

Standard requirements for the submission of programme for eradication, control and surveillance

B. Targets

B.1 Disease surveillance in domestic pigs to be carried out

Targets for year : **2023**

Country	Region	Type of farms	Total number of farms	Number of farms to be sampled	Number of animals to be sampled	Expected number of farms with serologically positive result	Expected number of farms with active infection detected	
BELGIQUE-BELGIE	Whole of BE	Commercial	6 000	10 000	30 000	0	0	X
Totals :			6 000	10000	30 000	0	0	
Total number of animals to be sampled in MS (blood)						Add a new row		
						30000		

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B.2 Disease surveillance in feral pigs/wild boar to be carried out

Targets for year: **2023**

Country	Region	Estimation of the population	Method of estimation used	Species	Type surveillance	Number of animals to be tested	Expected animals positive	
BELGIQUE-BELGIE	Wallonia	85 000	hunting bag	wild boar	Passive	200	0	X
BELGIQUE-BELGIE	Flanders	4 500	hunting bag	wild boar	Passive	50	0	X
Totals :		89 500				250	0	
						Add a new row		
						<i>Animals sampled Active in MS</i>	0	
						<i>Animals sampled Passive in MS</i>	250	
						<i>Animals sampled - Total in MS</i>	250	

B.3 Feral pigs/wild boar oral vaccination to be carried out

B.4 Stratified data on diagnostic test and results

Targets for year: **2023**

Country	Region	Animal population	Laboratory tests used	Type of sample	Number of animals to be tested	Number of tests to be carried out	Expected number of positive results	Comments	
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Standard requirements for the submission of programme for eradication, control and surveillance

BELGIQUE-BELGIE	Whole of BE	Domestic pigs	PCR	Blood	28 500	4000	0	pooling where possible	X
BELGIQUE-BELGIE	Whole of BE	Domestic pigs	PCR	Tissue	1 500	1500	0	Individual analysis	X
BELGIQUE-BELGIE	Whole of BE	Domestic pigs	IPT	Tissue	20	20	0	Individual analysis	X
BELGIQUE-BELGIE	Wallonia	Wild boar	PCR	Tissue	200	200	0	individual analysis	X
BELGIQUE-BELGIE	Flanders	Wild boar	PCR	Tissue	50	50	0	Individual analysis	X
Totals :					30 270	5 770	0		
Add a new row									
Total tests ELISA in MS						0			
Total tests PCR in MS						5 750			
Total tests Virus isolation/virological test in MS						0			
Total tests IPT in MS						20			
Total tests (Other) in MS						0			

Standard requirements for the submission of programme for eradication, control and surveillance

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C.2. Financial informaton

1. Identification of the implementing entities - financial circuits/flows

Identify and describe the entities which will be in charge of implementing the eligible measures planned in this programme which costs will constitute the reimbursement/payment claim to the EU. Describe the financial flows/circuits followed.

Each of the following paragraphs (from a to e) shall be filled out if EU cofinancing is requested for the related measure.

a) Implementing entities - **sampling**: who performs the official sampling? Who pays?
(e.g. authorised private vets perform the sampling and are paid by the regional veterinary services (state budget); sampling equipment is provided by the private laboratory testing the samples which includes the price in the invoice which is paid by the local state veterinary services (state budget))

(max. 32000 chars):

1. Wild boar

Sampling in wild boar is carried out by the RSSFS (Wallonia), refuge centres and DGZ (Flanders), private vets (Brussels-capital region). All actors are paid for by the competent regional authorities of Wallonia (DNF), Flanders (ANB) and Brussels-capital region (BE).

Standard requirements for the submission of programme for eradication, control and surveillance

2. Domestic pigs

Sampling in domestic pigs is performed by private vets. They are paid for each sample by the Sanitary Fund based.

b) Implementing entities - **testing**: who performs the testing of the official samples? Who pays?
(e.g. regional public laboratories perform the testing of official samples and costs related to this testing are entirely paid by the state budget)

(max. 32000 chars):

1. Wild boar

All testing in wild boar is performed by the national reference laboratory Sciensano . All analysis are paid for by the competent regional authorities of Wallonia (DNF), Flanders (ANB) and Brussels-capital region (BE).

2. Domestic pigs

The testing in domestic pigs is mainly done by the first line laboratories DGZ and ARSIA, except for tissue samples that are tested by the National reference laboratory Sciensano. Positive samples are retested also by the national reference laboratory Sciensano. All analysis are paid for by the FASFC.

c) Implementing entities - **compensation**: who performs the compensation? Who pays?
(e.g. compensation is paid by the central level of the state veterinary services,
or compensation is paid by an insurance fund fed by compulsory farmers contribution)

Standard requirements for the submission of programme for eradication, control and surveillance

(max. 32000 chars):

1. Wild boar
Not applicable

2. Domestic pigs

The compensation of animals culled in the framework of ASF is paid for by the Sanitary Fund.

d) Implementing entities - **vaccination**: who provides the vaccine and who performs the vaccination? Who pays the vaccine? Who pays the vaccinator?

(e.g. farmers buy their vaccine to the private vets, send the paid invoices to the local state veterinary services which reimburse the farmers of the full amount and the vaccinator is paid by the regional state veterinary services)

(max. 32000 chars):

Not applicable.

e) Implementing entities - **other essential measures**: who implements this measure? Who provides the equipment/service? Who pays?

(max. 32000 chars):

Not applicable.

Standard requirements for the submission of programme for eradication, control and surveillance

2. Source of funding of eligible measures

All eligible measures for which cofinancing is requested and reimbursement will be claimed are financed by public funds.

yes

no

3. Additional measures in exceptional and justified cases

In the "*Guidelines for the Union co-funded veterinary programmes*", it is indicated that in exceptional and duly justified cases, additional necessary measures can be proposed by the Member States in their application.

If you introduced these type of measures in this programme, for each of them, please provide detailed technical justification and also justification of their cost:

Not applicable.

Standard requirements for the submission of programme for eradication, control and surveillance

Attachments

IMPORTANT :

- 1) The more files you attach, the longer it takes to upload them .
- 2) This attachment files should have one of the format listed here : jpg, jpeg, tiff, tif, xls, xlsx, doc, docx, ppt, pptx, bmp, pna, pdf.
- 3) The total file size of the attached files should not exceed 2 500Kb (+- 2.5 Mb). You will receive a message while attaching when you try to load too much.
- 4) IT CAN TAKE **SEVERAL MINUTES TO UPLOAD** ALL THE ATTACHED FILES. Don't interrupt the uploading by closing the pdf and wait until you have received a Submission Number!
- 5) Only use letters from a-z and numbers from 1-10 in the attachment names, otherwise the submission of the data will not work.

List of all attachments

	Attachment name	File will be saved as (only a-z and 0-9 and -_):	File size
	ERAFUNDSPESTFUNDS_PPD.pdf	ERAFUNDSPESTFUNDS_PPD.pdf	288 kb
		Total size of attachments :	288 kb