



ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE NEWS

December 2018

The Animal Health and Welfare Officers from Argyll and Bute Council work across the area inspecting farms and dealing with complaints and queries in relation to animal health and welfare.

Our service focuses on inspecting those farms which we have identified as high risk and as many medium risk farms as possible. This means that many livestock owners will not be visited by the Council's Animal Health Officers.

In the course of our routine work, we have identified a number of issues which may be common across the farming industry in Argyll and Bute. We want to make sure that the wider agricultural community is aware of the issues which we have identified. The information in this newsletter is provided so that you can take steps within your own business to address any issues which might have arisen.

We hope you find this information useful. If you require any further information you can visit www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/animal-health-and-welfare, email animalhealth@argyll-bute.gov.uk or telephone 01546 605519.

AFRICAN SWINE FLU (ASF)

Following a significant increase in the number of cases of ASF, a disease of pigs, in Eastern Europe, and recent western spread to Belgium, the risk of an introduction of this disease to the UK has increased and is causing concern. ASF has been spreading in Eastern Europe since it first entered the European Union (EU) in 2014 from countries further east. In addition to the new cases in Belgium, the disease is already present in a number of EU Member States.

Although the disease does not affect humans and there is no food safety risk associated with meat, ASF is a highly contagious and usually fatal viral disease of pigs. An outbreak of ASF would also have a devastating impact on the UK pork industry affecting pig health and welfare and the ability of UK to trade pigs and pork products. If disease also got into feral pig populations it could also have an impact on their health and welfare, and Government would be obliged to put in place restrictions on hunting for a minimum period of at least two years.

We want to take this opportunity to stress the need for everyone travelling to the continent for hunting and shooting or similarly organising these activities in the UK, to take several precautions to reduce the risk of ASF entering the UK. The virus could be introduced in

several ways, the main one being native pigs or wild boar consuming imported infected meat or meat products. The virus can survive months to years in smoked, dried, cured and frozen meat and meat products from infected pork or wild boar. Infection could also enter on contaminated boots, clothes, vehicles or equipment.

In order to help reduce the risk of introducing this disease, please do not bring back pork or wild boar meat and meat products to the UK. If such items are brought back, it is vital that they are safely disposed of in sealed bins and are never left in open bins or discarded from vehicles. These items must also never be fed to pigs or wild boar - to do so is illegal, and risks causing their illness and death. Other things hunters can do are:

- Avoid hunting in ASF affected countries (some affected countries are banning hunting).
- Avoid contact with wildboar found dead or sick
- Avoid contact with UK domestic pigs or wild boar on your return.
- Do not bring meat or meat products back to the UK, especially pork or pork products.
- Never feed pigs or wild boar with any meat or meat products - THIS IS ILLEGAL.
- Please do not bring dogs on hunting trips, as ASF infection can survive in their fur.

By taking these measures, hunters and land owners can play their role in protecting the health of our pigs.

Further biosecurity advice and the latest news on ASF can be found on the **Defra**, **DAERA-NI**, **Scottish** and **Welsh Government** websites.

INCREASED RISK OF AFRICAN SWINE FEVER BEING INTRODUCED INTO THE UK:

⚠ IMPORTANT ADVICE FOR ALL HUNTERS



What is African Swine Fever?

- ▲ African swine fever (ASF) is a disease of pigs caused by a virus, which is usually fatal to domestic pigs and wild boar.
- ▲ ASF is spreading through continental Europe and the risk of it entering the UK has increased.
- ▲ The virus is present in very high amounts in blood, meat, offal and carcasses of affected wild boar, as well as in their droppings.
- ▲ ASF virus can survive for months to years in smoked, dried, cured and frozen meat from affected pigs or wild boar.
- ▲ Hunters can inadvertently bring back ASF infection if their clothing, footwear or equipment is contaminated directly from wild boar or indirectly from the environment.
- ▲ Introduction of ASF into UK domestic pigs or feral boar would be devastating for their health and for the country's pig industry.

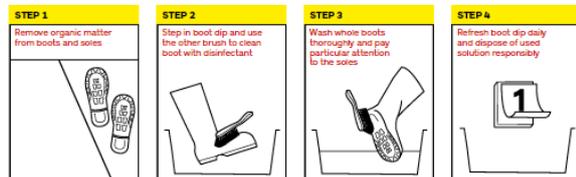
Vital things hunters, especially wild boar hunters can do to help:

- ▲ **AVOID HUNTING** in ASF affected countries, as you can make the problem worse. Some affected countries are banning hunting, so check before you go.
- ▲ **AVOID CONTACT** with wild boar found dead or sick, and the area near them.
- ▲ **AVOID CONTACT** with UK domestic pigs or wild boar on your return. If you have to visit premises with pigs, advice can be found at: pork.ahdb.org.uk/media/2726/visitor_factsheet.pdf
- ▲ **PLEASE DO NOT** bring meat or meat products back to the UK, especially pork or pork products.
- ▲ **NEVER** feed pigs or wild boar with any meat or meat products – **THIS IS ILLEGAL.**
- ▲ **PLEASE DO NOT** bring dogs on hunting trips, as ASF infection can survive in their fur.

Practise good biosecurity

- ▲ **CLEAN** and, where appropriate, **DISINFECT** your clothing, equipment, vehicle and footwear thoroughly before returning to the UK.
- ▲ **DO NOT** remove trophies or carcase parts from the country or region.
- ▲ Use a government approved disinfectant at General Orders rate – listed on gov.uk

HOW TO USE A DISINFECTANT BOOT DIP



Adapted from WDA checks to Europe for permission to re-printed graphics



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