

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: African Swine Fever Update

Country: Romania

Post: Bucharest

Report Category: Agricultural Situation, Livestock and Products, Pest/Disease Occurrences

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Report Highlights:

The number of active African swine fever (ASF) cases is trending downward in Romania. At the end of June 2020, the number of active cases was 243 versus, down from 609 active cases in January 2020. Despite the downward trend in 2020, to date, Romania's number of active ASF cases are still significantly higher than the 55 active cases in June 2019. 2019 pork meat production fell by nearly eight percent from 2018. Romania's commercial pork industry is increasingly pressing Romanian authorities to more actively control the ASF outbreak among small holders.

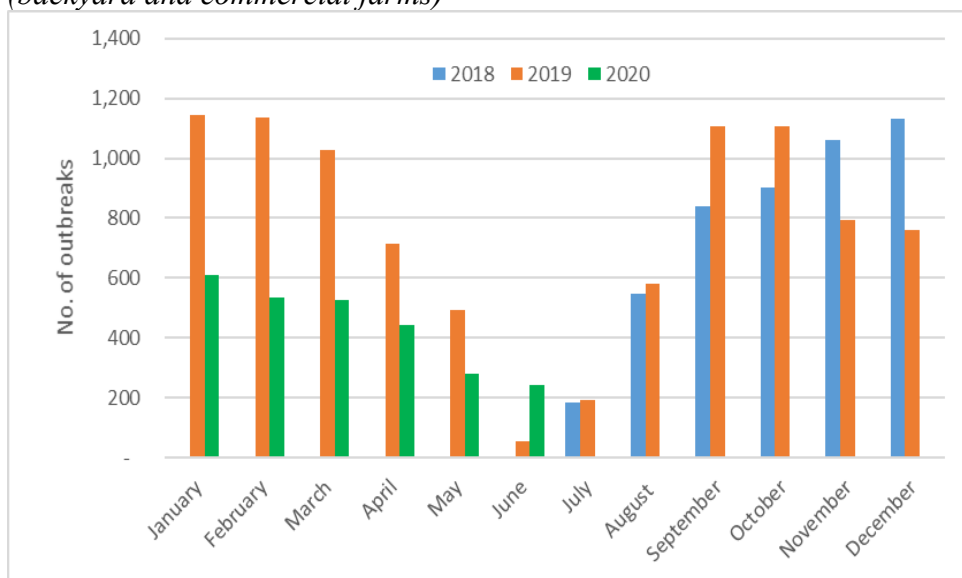
Update on ASF in Romania

Romania's ASF outbreak has negatively affected the country's entire swine and pork value chain. According to the Romanian National Institute of Statistics, pork meat production declined from 550,000 metric tons (MT) live-weight in 2018 to 509,000 MT in 2019, a 7.5 percent drop. This reduction marks a third consecutive year-on-year decline following 2018's 5.5 percent decrease from 2017.

Currently, 243 ASF outbreaks are active in domestic Romanian hog holdings, including four commercial farms, a significant increase over the same period in 2019 (Chart 1). There is also a notable downward trend in cases since January 2020. Besides domestic pigs, about 3,700 wild boars have tested positive since Romania's first outbreak in July 2017.

As of the end of June 2020, Romanian authorities have culled roughly 670,000 pigs under the ASF eradication program. The number of culled pigs during the first half of 2020 was considerably higher than the same timeframe of 2019, due to outbreaks on large commercial farms in 2020. Both fattening and breeding farms have been hard-hit so far this year. To date, the Government of Romania (GOR) has disbursed upwards of \$105 million from the national budget to compensate 15,133 pig owners for their losses.

Chart 1: Romania – Monthly Number of Active Cases
(backyard and commercial farms)



Source: National Veterinary and Food Safety Authority

Upcoming Legislation for the Swine Sector

New biosecurity legislation regarding mandatory biosecurity measures for each type of holding (e.g. backyard, small farm, large commercial farm) remains pending. Proposed regulatory updates from the National Veterinary and Food Safety Authority (ANSVSA) earlier this year prompted criticism from backyard holders and small hog farmers, who felt they would be disadvantaged. Conversely, large commercial hog operators complained that implementation delays, including animal identification and movement restrictions, as required by the European Commission, would hurt larger operations producing for the commercial market. In June 2020, ANSVSA announced that a revised draft would be

published soon. The GOR also announced that it would increase hunters' quotas for harvesting wild boars, which are considered the main vector for ASF transmission.

Romania is also reportedly close to implementing a 2018 law to provide financial incentives to swine breeders as a means to address Romania's live piglet deficit. The 2018 law never entered into force, but a recent version may be forthcoming.

Attachments:

No Attachments.