

African swine fever (ASF) – how a sausage can end up finishing the Danish pig production.

1/4 of the pigs in the world died since last year (half of the Chinese pig production), because of African swine fever. If an outbreak of swine fever occurs in Denmark, it will cost 4 billion dkk.

ASF is impossible to eradicate in wild boars, but can be eradicated on farms. But until then it will have caused a lot of damage.

Here is what happens if ASF is found on a Danish farm:

- Export and slaughtering are stopped immediately. Pigs cannot be transported, and because of the limited space on the farms, pigs will have to be killed instead.
- 4 days after the outbreak slaughter can start in Denmark, besides a 10km zone around the outbreak.
- 14 days after the outbreak export to EU can start., But not to countries outside EU.
- Min. 4 months after the outbreak (in some cases even more), export to countries outside EU can start.

There will be no specific signs. Maybe some of the following signs are seen:

- No appetite
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Bleedings and red skin

Pigs will not die until 7-10 days after infection, but by then, mortality will be high (80-90%), and the virus has spread to a lot of pigs.

If you see signs, don't send the pigs for slaughter – call the veterinarian! False alarm is better than missing an outbreak.

Food is the most common way the disease is spread, especially sausage. In some countries it is tradition to feed meat scraps to the pigs, and thereby it has been quickly widespread, as we have already seen in some cases. We do not do swill feed in Denmark. Even small amounts can be fatal. That's why, all farms should have employees sign an agreement not to bring food to the farm, to change clothes and boots, and to have quarantine of 24 hours after visiting a country with ASF.

Wild boars are also a risk. Contaminated food waste left in nature, can be eaten by wild boars and they spread the virus to new places. But now a fence is built to minimize migration of new wild boars from Germany to Denmark.

Other risk factors are hunting and trucks. As a general rule, do not bring trophies and hunting clothes to the farm. For trucks, check the wash certificate, do not let truck drivers access the farm, and don't let pigs go back to the farm, if they have been on the truck.