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Thematic portfolio



African swine fever: responding to the global threat



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The Czech Republic is one of the few countries that has successfully eradicated African swine fever (ASF) within its territory. Early surveillance, strict veterinary measures and biosecurity, and a coordinated approach played key roles in the successful eradication of the disease.

The first occurrence of ASF was detected in two dead wild pigs in June 2017. The last ASF-positive cases were detected in February 2018 in hunted wild pigs, and in April 2018 in wild pigs found dead. All positive cases were detected in a small area (89 km²) in the Zlín District. There was no outbreak of ASF in domestic pigs.

The following is a brief overview of key control measures used for the successful eradication of ASF.

Early detection and surveillance

It is most important to have early detection of the presence of ASF virus based on passive surveillance in dead wild pigs, and ongoing intensive monitoring.

Zoning

The infected area was defined in compliance with the European Union legislation [1]. At the same time, the area with intensive hunting was determined. The infected area was divided into two parts: a) the high-risk zone (with positive findings), and b) the low-risk zone (Fig. 1).

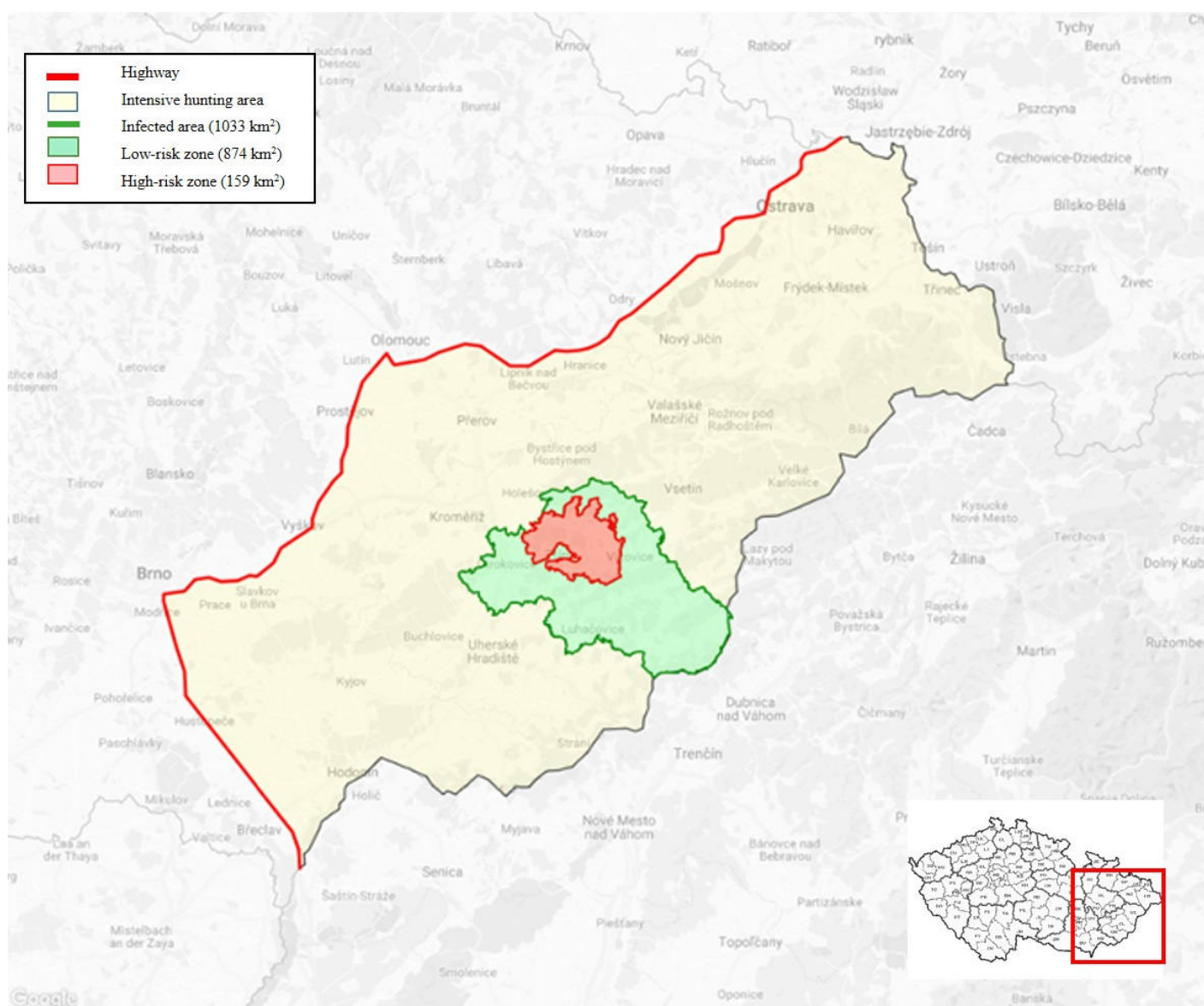


Fig. 1. Map of zones established within the Czech Republic. © Státní veterinární správa

Intensive search for wild pig carcasses

Carcasses of infected wild pigs constitute the greatest risk for the spread of ASF in wild pig populations and this is why an intensive search for wild pig carcasses was implemented in the infected area (Fig. 2). These carcasses were collected while observing strict biosecurity and were transported to a rendering plant.



Fig. 2. Straw contaminated by carcass of dead wild pig. © Státní veterinární správa

Preventing the migration of infected wild pigs

Hunting and feeding of wild pigs were strictly prohibited in the infected area. Some unharvested crops were left in the high-risk zone. Odour and electric fences were installed on the outer periphery of the high-risk zone, and a ban on entering this zone without permission was implemented.

Reduction of the population of wild pigs

After evaluation of the surveillance results, individual hunting in the infected area was allowed for approved hunters trained in biosecurity rules. At the end of the epidemic phase of the infection, police snipers helped to reduce the number of wild pigs in the high-risk zone.

Prevention of introduction to domestic pigs

The measures imposed included a ban on all movements of domestic pigs and products, official inspections of all pig farms targeted on biosecurity, and a wide public information campaign.

✖ More information about our experience is available in published texts [2, 3].

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AROUND THE WORLD

▶ SUCCESS STORIES

Lessons learned from successful eradication of ASF in the Czech Republic

KEYWORDS

#African swine fever (ASF), #Czech Republic, #eradication, #hunting, #self-declaration, #wild boar.

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