

## THIS IS THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS A FULL ASF-FREE STATUS:

# EUROPEAN COMMISSION RATIFIES: BELGIUM MAY REDUCE THE ASF-INFECTED ZONE.

Brussels, 27 May, 2020

*On 18 May, the European Commission ratified Belgium's proposal to reduce the ASF-infected zone in the province of Luxembourg. This zone, in which African Swine Fever was detected only in wild boar, was successfully installed by Belgian authorities to prevent the contamination of domestic pigs. "The reduction of the zone is a positive signal towards countries that have suspended the import of Belgian pork," says Denis Ducarme, Belgian Minister of Agriculture.*

Immediately after the detection of African Swine Fever in two wild boars, on 13 September 2018, the FASFC (Belgium's Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain), demarcated an "infected zone" and a "buffer zone", in consultation with the European Commission and ministers. The few domestic pigs in the initial infection zone were preventively eradicated between 27 September and 3 October 2018. The products of these pigs did not enter the food chain and were not used in the feed industry.

### RECOGNITION OF PROVEN EFFECTIVENESS

Within the infected zone, a series of control measures were quickly put in place:

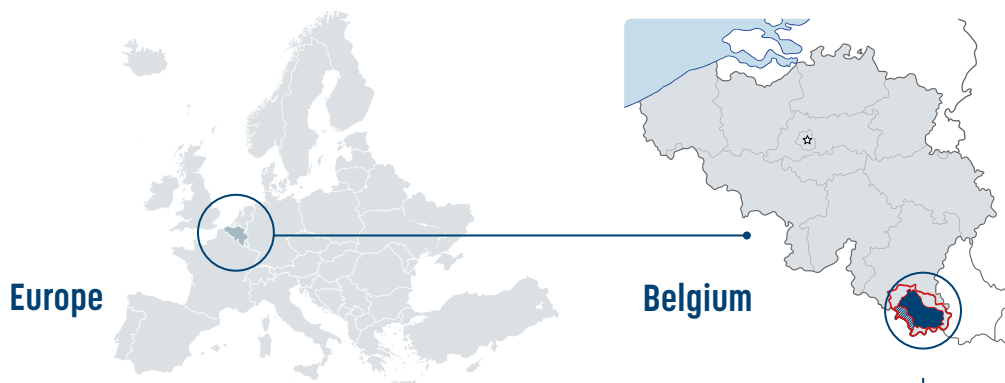
- zoning,
- carcass removal,
- a complete feeding ban,
- specific hunting regulations and depopulation actions depending on the zone, leading to almost no wild boar left within zone II,
- a partial ban of people and logging, and
- more than 300 km of concentric placed fences.

Outside the zones and in the domestic herd, an active surveillance has been maintained. The measures have proven effective to keep ASF inside the affected zone. The last ASF-positive test on a fresh carcass of a dead boar, found within the zone, goes back to 11 August 2019. On 6 occasions after that date, ASF was found on the remains (bones) of wild boar that died several months before their discovery.

**So, one year after ASF was first detected in Belgium, the measures have stopped the spread of the disease. This observation is backed by the ongoing, intensive search.**



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## REDUCTION OF THE INFECTED ZONE

Belgium therefore proposed to reduce the demarcated zone. This proposal now is ratified by the European Commission.

The reduction (shaded) concerns a part of the “infected zone” (zone II) within the “buffer zone” (zone I), a zone in which no infected animals have been detected since 17 February 2019.



Zoning

// Ongoing search inside and outside the zones and active surveillance in the domestic herd pave the way towards a full the ASF-free status //

Ever since the first wild boar tested ASF-positive, Belgium has succeeded in keeping domestic pigs and wild pigs kept in captivity free of ASF contamination. If no infected boar are detected, Belgium could regain its ASF-free status for all porcine animals in the Autumn of 2020. Denis Ducarme, Belgian Minister of Agriculture: “We must remain vigilant to give back our country its ASF-free status. This would lead to the abolishment of the last embargoes on the export of our pork.”

All this time, Belgian pork remained virus-free and suitable for consumption and export. Therefore, trade of Belgian pork remained free in the European Union. However, some third countries suspended the import of Belgian pork. The ratification by the European Commission is an important step towards the re-opening of these markets.

For all latest details on the measures taken and on the current situation in Belgium:

[www.fasfc.be/outbreaks-african-swine-fever](http://www.fasfc.be/outbreaks-african-swine-fever)

### Press Contact

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### About Belgian Meat Office

Belgian Meat Office coordinates pork and beef export activities. The meat export agency was founded in 2003 under the Flanders’ Agricultural Marketing Board (VLAM) umbrella.

### More Info

[www.europeanpork.eu](http://www.europeanpork.eu) | [www.belgianmeat.com](http://www.belgianmeat.com)



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