



African Swine Fever

 [drishtias.com/printpdf/african-swine-fever](https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/african-swine-fever)

Why in News?

China is witnessing **rise in pork prices** because of the rampant **spread of African Swine Fever (ASF)**. The country is the **world's largest pork** (meat from a pig) **producer**.

About ASF

- ASF is a highly **contagious** and fatal animal disease that infects **domestic and wild pigs**. It leads to an acute form of hemorrhagic fever. It was **first detected in Africa** in the 1920s.
- The mortality is close to 100%, and since the fever has **no cure**, the **only way** to stop its spread is by **culling the animals**.
- ASF is **not a threat to human beings** since it only spreads from animals to other animals.

Key Points

- Historically, outbreaks have been reported in Africa and parts of Europe, South America, and the Caribbean.
- However, **more recently** (since 2007), the disease has been reported in multiple countries across Africa, Asia and Europe, in both domestic and wild pigs.
- ASF is a disease **listed in the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Terrestrial Animal Health Code** and thus, reported to the OIE.

World Organisation for Animal Health

- OIE is an **intergovernmental organisation** responsible for improving animal health worldwide.
- In 2018, it had a total of **182 Member Countries**. **India** is **one of the member countries**.

- OIE develops **normative documents** relating to rules that Member Countries can use to protect themselves from the introduction of diseases and pathogens. One of them is the Terrestrial Animal Health Code.
- OIE standards are **recognised by the World Trade Organization** as reference international sanitary rules.
- It is headquartered in **Paris, France**.

African swine fever (ASF)



The virus is highly **resistant to low temperatures** and can survive for extended periods of time in the blood, feces and tissue of infected animals.

ASF is a **highly contagious**, transboundary viral disease (*Asfarviridae* family; *Asfivirus* genus).

It can affect both domestic and wild pigs (wild boars and peccaries). **It is harmless to humans.**

According to the OIE, **24%** of its member countries (48 out of 200) **have reported the disease** as present since 2016.

Typical clinical signs of ASF are similar to those of classical swine fever (which is endemic in several countries of the Americas); therefore, a **laboratory test** is required to distinguish them.

The **peracute** form of the virus causes sudden death with few signs.

African swine fever can be transmitted through **direct contact** between sick and healthy animals. It can also be transmitted **indirectly** through feed containing meat from infected animals (the virus can remain infectious for 3 to 6 months in uncooked pork products); **biological vectors** such as ticks of the genus *Ornithodoros*; and contaminated **inanimate objects** (fomites) that can transmit the virus.

Global alarms went off in August 2018, when an ASF outbreak was first reported in **China**. The disease swept through the entire Asian country and spread to **Mongolia, Vietnam, Cambodia and Hong Kong**.

According to official data for this period, more than **2.5 million domestic pigs** have died or been killed— 67.6% of them in Asia over the past 10 months.

Between 2016 and May 2019, there were a total of **10,211 outbreaks in Africa, Europe and Asia**.

Symptoms include **fever, loss of appetite**, low energy, abortion, internal hemorrhages, visible hemorrhages, and even death.

Source: IE