

Swine Disease Global Surveillance Report

Immediate release – July 29, 2021

African swine fever (ASF) diagnosed on a new continent:

ASF has been reported in the Dominican Republic after 40 years since the last outbreak

On July 28, 2021, the Ministry of Agriculture of the Dominican Republic confirmed the presence of African swine fever (ASF) after learning the results of tests on 389 samples collected from pigs raised on farms and in backyards sent to the USDA - Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (Plum Island) through an existing cooperative surveillance program.

The arrival of ASF in the Dominican Republic means the disease has leapt into the Americas for the first time in 40 years. Back then, the Dominican Republic dealt with the disease from 1978 to 1980, with 374 outbreaks reported throughout that period, representing an impact of 192,473 culled pigs.

With this report, ASF is found on all five continents.

The Dominican Government has reported there is a total population of approximately 15,000 pigs in Sánchez Ramírez and 4,600 in Montecristi (Map 1), the provinces where the outbreaks have been detected. A backyard swine herd in Sánchez Ramírez feeding swill was tested, with eight of 12 animals testing positive. Another backyard swine herd in Montecristi also tested positive.

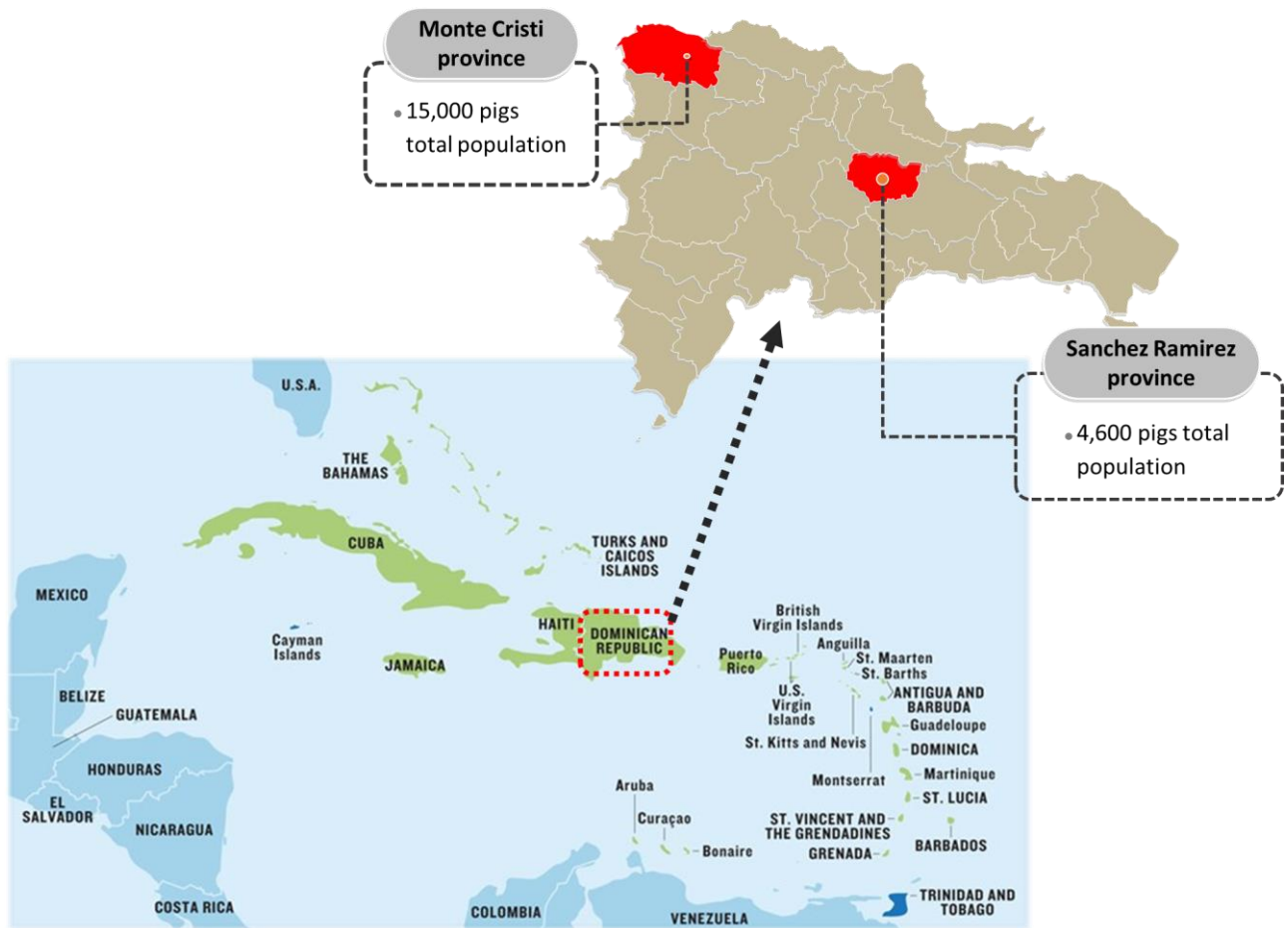
"This is a small population compared to the total population of pigs in the country, which is estimated between 1.5 million and 1.8 million pigs," authorities stated.

Early response

The Dominican government has assured that its Minister of Agriculture has already activated the National Emergency Committee for Exotic Diseases of Domestic Animals to ensure all institutions in the agricultural sector operate in a coordinated way to guarantee the national production of pigs.

Some of the immediate actions in place include:

- Entry and exit of live and slaughtered pigs in the affected provinces have been prohibited
- Military checkpoints have been strategically established in both provinces
- Epidemiological investigations are being carried out



Map 1. Dominican provinces affected by ASF

USDA response

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has numerous interlocking safeguards in place to prevent ASF from entering the United States. Pork and pork products from the Dominican Republic are currently prohibited entry as a result of existing classical swine fever (CSF) restrictions.

Additionally, the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is increasing inspections of flights from the Dominican Republic to ensure travelers do not bring prohibited products to the United States. CBP will also be ensuring that garbage from these airplanes is properly disposed of to prevent the transmission of ASF.

USDA is committed to assisting the Dominican Republic in dealing with ASF, is offering continued testing support, and will consult with them on additional steps or actions to support response and mitigation measures. USDA will also provide similar help to Haiti, which borders the Dominican Republic and is at high risk for ASF detections.

USDA has urged the Department of Homeland Security to increase surveillance of humans and their baggage from the Dominican Republic, especially by the beagle patrol, to have even more scrutiny for illegal movement of meat and pork products.

Regional concern

In the last few days, local news agencies have reported an increase in the mortality of pigs in Ansa a Pitres, a small Haitian town near the border with the Dominican Republic.

Dominican authorities have banned the commercialization of swine meat in the border region after receiving some reports from the Dominican military forces at the border regarding the events developing in the neighboring country.

USDA has alerted Puerto Rico and will have an increased presence and surveillance for Puerto Rico. Concerns with illegal boat movements from D.R. to other Caribbean countries are a concern, also.

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AMERICA

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