

EN
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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(6.1.2025)

The health of farm animals and the sustainability of the agricultural sector are top priorities for the Commission, and it will continue to monitor the situation closely to identify further measures that may become necessary.

Currently a comprehensive ‘Animal Health Law’¹ supports the EU livestock sector, replacing a huge number of previous legal acts with a single Regulation that is directly applicable in all Member States. In addition, the EU adopted a harmonised set of specific rules and guidelines on African swine fever (ASF) preparedness and control as well as regionalisation, guaranteeing the safe trade of pigs and pig products from disease-free areas^{2,3,4}. On this basis, and thanks to its regionalisation policy, the EU can continue to trade pigs and pig products.

Biosecurity and movement control are key for the control of ASF and provide for sustainability of the pig sector. Since 2014, more than EUR 230 million have been granted from the EU budget through veterinary programmes⁵ and emergency measures⁶ to support the fight against ASF in Member States and in neighbouring candidate countries. As regards vaccine development against ASF, there are three on-going projects⁷ for a total of EUR 20 million.

Support to farmers for improving on-farm biosecurity is available in Rural Development Programmes⁸ and in Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plans⁹, if programmed by Member States. Compensation for prevention, control and eradication of ASF is also possible within the framework of state aid rules^{10,11}.

¹ OJ L 84, 31.3.2016, p. 1, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/429/oj>

² Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 of 17 December 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and the Council, as regards rules for the prevention and control of certain listed diseases (OJ L 174, 3.6.2020, p. 64).

³ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 of 16 March 2023 laying down special disease control measures for African swine fever (OJ L 79, 17.3.2023, p. 65–150. http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2023/594/oj)

⁴ Commission Notice on the guidelines on the prevention, control and eradication of African swine fever in the Union (‘ASF guidelines’) (OJ C, C/2023/1504, 18.12.2023, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2023/1504/oj>)

⁵ https://hadea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/single-market-programme-food/veterinary-programmes/2021-2022-programme-implementation_en

⁶ https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/funding-procurement-grants/food-chain-funding/funding-animal-health-measures/emergency-measures_en

⁷ VACDIVA: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/862874>; ASFaVIP

<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101136676> ; VAX4ASF <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101136439>

⁸ Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 487).

⁹ Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013.

¹⁰ See Section 1.2.1.3 of the Guidelines for state aid in the agricultural and forestry sectors and in rural areas (OJ C 485, 21.12.2022, p. 1) and Article 26 of Commission Regulation (EU) 2022/2472 of 14 December 2022

Currently, the Commission does not foresee any additional ad hoc and long-term financial support for biosecurity measures from funds outside the common agricultural policy.

declaring certain categories of aid in the agricultural and forestry sectors and in rural areas compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (OJ L 327, 21.12.2022, p. 1).

¹¹ <https://competition-cases.ec.europa.eu/search>