



Classic Swine Fever Surveillance Programme

Background

Classical swine fever (CSF) is caused by the classical swine fever virus (CSFV). This is a virus in the family Flaviviridae, of the genus *Pestivirus*. This genus also includes bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) virus and the border disease virus. Classical swine fever can take an acute or chronic course. Clinical signs include respiratory signs and gastrointestinal signs in acute cases, and nonspecific signs including intermittent fever, enteritis and wasting in chronic cases. As with other *pestiviruses*, infection of porcine foetuses at certain stages can result in the birth of persistently viraemic animals. CSF does not affect humans. Ireland was awarded officially recognised freedom from Classical Swine Fever by the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) in May 2015, which has been continually maintained ever since. The WOAH official disease-free status is awarded following submission of an annual reconfirmation dossier which WOAH delegates then vote on each May at the General Assembly of WOAH Delegates. See link below:

[Classical swine fever - WOAH - World Organisation for Animal Health](#)

CSF was last reported in Ireland in 1958. Vaccination against CSF has never been carried out in Ireland, and it is prohibited under the Control of Animal Vaccines Regulations 2014 [S.I. No. 193 of 2014]. This has not been affected by either of the amendments to this S.I. published since.

Surveillance Design

Surveillance for CSF in Ireland is carried out in accordance with Articles 15.2.28 to 15.2.33 of the WOAH's terrestrial animal health code.



CSF: Active Surveillance

The following CSF testing (initiated by DAFM) is carried out in Ireland:

- Sampling of cull sows in slaughter plants to provide confidence of freedom from the disease. Blood samples for the programme are taken from cull sows in slaughter plants. Herds which contain twenty sows or more are eligible for sampling. The upper limit for the number of samples to be taken from any one herd is twenty. All tests are carried out in the blood testing laboratory operated by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) in Cork.
- Serological testing of boars prior to entry and whilst in approved semen collection centres (in accordance with Regulation 2016/429)
- Serological testing of pigs prior to export in accordance with Third Country certification requirements

CSF: Passive Surveillance

It should be noted that the active surveillance outlined above is supplementary to the passive surveillance which Ireland regards as its mainstay in detecting incursions of exotic disease.

CSF is a notifiable disease in Ireland, meaning that anyone who suspects that an animal or animal product is affected by the disease is legally obliged to notify DAFM.

Beyond disease reporting, DAFM operates a network of regional veterinary laboratories, strategically located around the country. Farmers and private veterinary practitioners (PVPs) submit large numbers of samples to the laboratories every week. This provides an additional route for DAFM to detect an incursion of CSF.

Farmers are encouraged to report suspicions of CSF to their local Regional Veterinary Office, and to make use of their local Regional Veterinary Laboratory to aid with diagnosis of disease conditions.

CSF surveillance results 2020 - 2024

Table 1: Results of serology on samples from culled sows to support official WOA freedom.

Year	No. Serology Samples	No. CSF Positive
2020	2220	Nil
2021	2075	Nil
2022	1595	Nil
2023	1,553	Nil
2024	2,209	Nil



Table 2: Results of tests carried out for import / export purposes, health surveillance of boars at semen centres or as part of disease investigations.

Year	Antibody Tests	Antigen Tests	No. CSF Positive
2020	444	100	Nil
2021	430	86	Nil
2022	340	62	Nil
2023	295	37	Nil
2024	335	34	Nil

Thanks to the Blood Testing Laboratory in Cork and to the CVRL for data provided on numbers of tests carried out.