Germany confirms 1st case of swine fever on its territory

September 10 2020, by Frank Jordans

In this Nov. 9, 2019 file photo, a wild boar runs through a forest in the Taunus region near Frankfurt, Germany. Following a suspected case of African swine fever in Brandenburg, the Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture Julia Kloeckner informed about the results of the analysis after examining a sample of the carcass. The animal disease has been detected for the first time in Germany. (AP Photo/Michael Probst)

Germany has confirmed the first case of African swine fever on its territory, after a wild boar cadaver found in the eastern state of Brandenburg tested positive, the country's agriculture minister said Thursday.

African swine fever is usually deadly for pigs but doesn't affect humans. It has previously been confirmed in several European countries, leading to large-scale culls of wild boars and farmed pigs they have come into contact with.

Agriculture Minister Julia Kloeckner said authorities have prepared for the eventuality of a case occurring in Germany and will be imposing measures to prevent a possible spread of the disease from the Spree-Neisse region near the Polish border where the boar was found Wednesday.

The measures will include limiting the movement of people and vehicles out of the affected region, bans on farming and targeted culling of wild boars, she said.
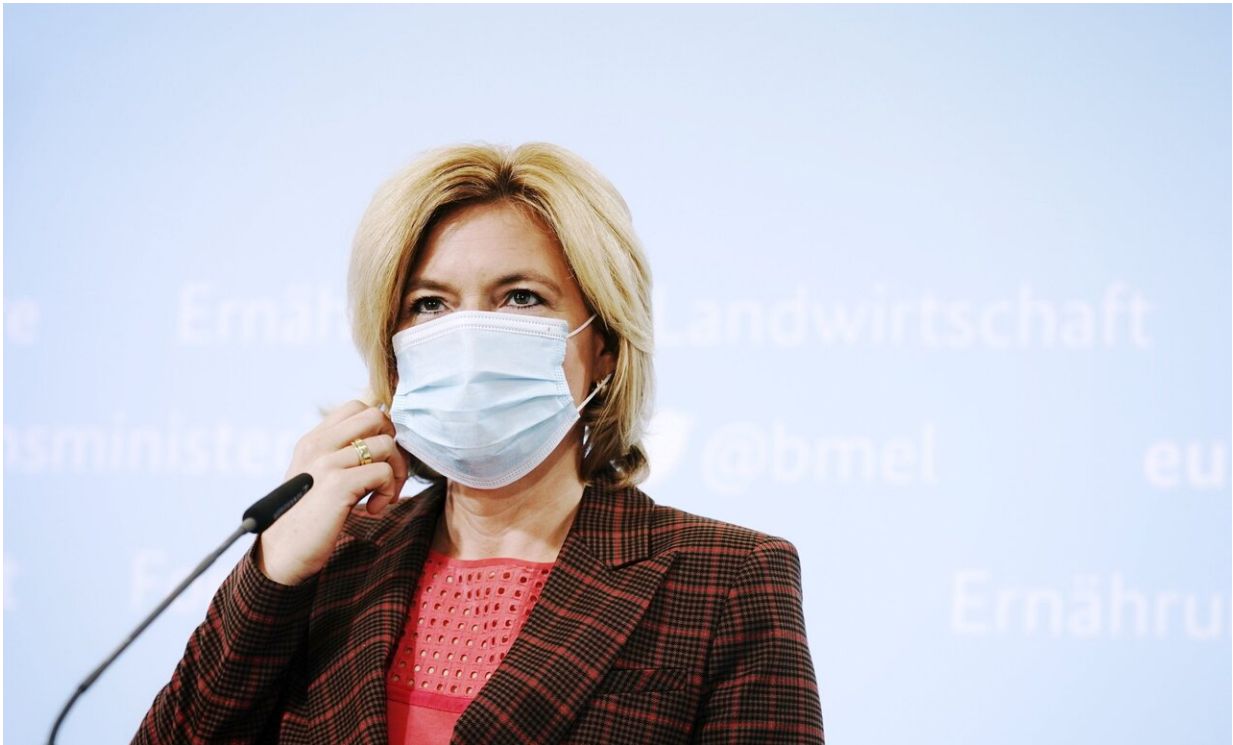
German farmers had been dreading the arrival of swine fever, considered almost inevitable, because of the impact it will have on the pork industry.

Kloeckner said trade in German pork products to other European Union countries will continue for now. She didn't comment on a possible export ban to major markets elsewhere, such as China.

The head of the German Farmers Association expressed concern about the outbreak, noting that there is no vaccine available yet for the virus that causes African swine fever.

In this Nov. 9, 2019 file photo, a wild boar jumps in the Taunus region near Frankfurt, Germany. Following a suspected case of African swine fever in Brandenburg, the Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture Julia Kloeckner informed about the results of the analysis after examining a sample of the carcass. The animal disease has been detected for the first time in Germany. (AP Photo/Michael Probst)

Julia Kloeckner, Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture, speaks at a press conference. Following a suspected case of African swine fever in Brandenburg, the Minister informed about the results of the analysis after examining a sample of the carcass. The animal disease has been detected for the first time in Germany, Kloeckner confirmed. (Kay Nietfeld/dpa via AP)

"We demand that politicians and authorities do everything to contain the epidemic and push it out of Germany again," said Joachim Rukwied. "We absolutely need to have a wild boar-free zone along the Polish border."

Both Poland and Hungary have reported over 3,000 cases of African swine fever this year.

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