

UN warns over swine fever outbreak in Ukraine

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A woman wears a mask on a market in the western Ukrainian city of Lviv in 2009. The United Nations food agency on Tuesday warned that an outbreak of African swine fever in Ukraine could pose a risk for animal health in the region as a whole despite swift moves to limit its spread.

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Kazakhstan, Latvia and Moldova "which have large pig populations raised on household or family farms and oftentimes weak biosecurity protocols are also now at [high risk](#)," the Rome-based Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said.

The FAO urged national and [local authorities](#) to scale up their prevention measures and be ready to respond in case of further outbreaks.

"This could be the first of more outbreaks to come according to our disease analyses," Juan Lubroth, FAO's chief veterinary officer, was quoted as saying.

African swine fever does not affect humans but mortalities in [domestic pigs](#) can be extremely high and outbreaks are often followed by mass culls.

Some 300,000 pigs died or were culled due to outbreaks in Russia in 2011.

The disease, which was confined to Africa and the Italian island of Sardinia until a few years ago, is now endemic in parts of Armenia, Georgia and Russia.

FAO said part of the reason for infections was "swill feeding" in which [food scraps](#) and leftovers are fed as a mix of liquid and solid food to pigs.

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