

Transboundary risks of disease transfer in food and feed supply chains

Jennifer van de Ligt
Director
Food Protection and Defense Institute
Integrated Food Systems Leadership Program
College of Veterinary Medicine
University of Minnesota

Abstract

Transboundary disease transfer has affected every aspect of our lives for almost three years. For swine producers and the pork industry, the introduction and rapid spread of African swine fever throughout China and southeast Asia in 2019, coupled with the increased prevalence across Europe, provided a stark warning about the risk of transboundary disease transfer. In 2020, this was compounded by the global spread of COVID in both human and animal populations. Both viruses demonstrated an utter lack of respect for international boundaries even when quarantine and import/export procedures were in place. The impact of food and feed supply chains on the spread of both African swine fever and COVID, and vice versa, is being actively investigated with new information emerging real-time. Accelerated scientific discovery can result in effective and applicable science-based solutions that promotes supply chain resilience and lowers risk of transboundary diseases transfer.