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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2019-0016]

Addition of Mongolia to the List of Regions Affected by African Swine Fever

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that we have added Mongolia to the list of regions that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service considers to be affected with African swine fever (ASF). We are taking this action because of the confirmation of ASF in Mongolia.

DATES: Mongolia was added to the APHIS list of regions considered affected with ASF on January 10, 2019.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Rebecca Gordon, Import Risk Analyst, Strategy and Policy, VS, APHIS, 920 Main Campus Drive, Suite 200, Raleigh, NC 27606; (919) 855-7741; email: Rebecca.k.gordon@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The regulations in 9 CFR part 94 (referred to below as the regulations) govern the importation of specified animals and animal products to prevent the introduction into the United States of various animal diseases, including foot-and-mouth disease, bovine spongiform encephalopathy, swine vesicular disease, classical swine fever, and African swine fever (ASF). These are dangerous and destructive diseases of ruminants and swine.

Section 94.8(a)(3) of the regulations states that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will consider a region to have ASF and add it to the list referenced in § 94.8(a)(2) upon determining ASF exists in the region, based on reports APHIS receives of outbreaks of the disease from veterinary officials of the exporting country, from the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), or from other sources the Administrator determines to be reliable.

ASF is a highly contagious disease of wild and domestic swine that can spread rapidly in swine populations with extremely high rates of morbidity and mortality. A list of regions where ASF exists or is reasonably believed to exist is maintained on the APHIS website at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-and-animal-product-import-information/animal-health-status-of-regions/>.

In a report dated January 15, 2019, the veterinary authorities of Mongolia reported to the OIE confirmation of an ASF outbreak on January 10, 2019. Therefore, in response to this outbreak, APHIS has added Mongolia to the list of regions where ASF exists or is reasonably believed to exist.

Although the importation of most swine commodities from Mongolia into the United States is already restricted based on that country's classical swine fever, foot-and-mouth disease, and swine vesicular disease status, APHIS has determined that it is necessary to impose ASF-related restrictions on the importation of pork and pork products from Mongolia into the United States.

As a result, pork and pork products from Mongolia, including casings, are subject to APHIS import restrictions designed to mitigate the risk of ASF introduction into the United States.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 1633, 7701-7772, 7781-7786, and 8301-8317; 21 U.S.C. 136 and 136a; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.4.

Done in Washington, DC, this 4th day of June 2019.

Kevin Shea,

Administrator,

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

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