

## **Mexico has solid mechanisms to address health emergencies.**

SENASICA reports that the 2019 African swine fever massive drill was successful in testing their infrastructure, human resources and technical and scientific assets to address emergencies caused by high-impact diseases.



The National Service of Food Safety and Agriculture Quality (SENASICA) reported that the 2019 African swine fever massive drill was successfully completed; It was an unprecedented operation that demonstrated that the country has the infrastructure, human resources and technical and scientific assets required to address a health emergency.

During his report of the assessment from three days of activities, in which 771 technicians and observers participated, Juan Gay Gutiérrez, General Director of Animal Health of the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development (SADER), pointed out that SENASICA is an organization prepared to address a health emergency caused by the entry of a high-impact disease, such as the African swine fever (ASF).

The massive drill included the participation of Víctor Villalobos Arámbula, Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development, Francisco Javier Trujillo Arriaga, Head of SENASICA, Gregory Ibach, U.S Undersecretary of Agriculture for Marketing and Regulatory Programs and Héctor Sánchez Anguiano, representative of OIRSA (Regional International Organization of Agriculture and Livestock Health) among others.

It also had the collaboration from 38 observers from pig farmers associations, 14 observers from universities, 73 members of the state and municipal policies, 8 members of the tourist assistance services (Ángeles Verdes), personnel of SENASICA and the Subsidiary Bodies of the SADER, workers from the Secretariats of Tourism, Economy and Environmental Protection, representatives

of international organizations and personnel from the governments and municipalities of the participating states.

The SENASICA was also supported by personnel of the Secretariat of Homeland Defense and the National Guard who, at all times, guarded the strategic facilities and assisted in controlling the mobilization of porcine animals and their products at road checkpoints.

Actions during the massive drill.

Roberto Navarro López, Director of the Mexico-United States Commission for Prevention of Foot-And-Mouth Disease and other Animal Exotic Diseases (CPA) informed, during the presentation of the results of the massive drill, that the objectives established for this event were achieved.

He detailed that all the SENASICA's assets to carry out and assess the response capacity of the Mexican veterinary services that operate through the Animal Health National Emergency Mechanism (DINESA) and the animal health emergency state groups (GEESA) were deployed.

In accordance with the logs of the exercise performed from September 24 to 26 (40 days in the context of the massive drill), an alleged case of ASF was detected on the 24th day of August, and the DINESA was activated in the following eight sites: Chiapas, Guanajuato, Nuevo Leon, Puebla, Queretaro, San Luis Potosi, Sonora and Yucatan, where different scenarios were outlined and which the technician had to resolve.

While the technicians performed counter epidemic tasks, the Health Emergencies Operations Center (COES) of the SENASICA was activated to act as the command center of operations to assess and test the communication and response protocols for addressing nationwide health emergencies.

On September 25, 20 days after the onset of the alleged emergency had passed and the technicians were working to stop the outbreak with actions of depopulation, cleaning and disinfection of farms, lab analysis to locate cases and mobilization control in strategic points to prevent pork products from leaving the zone of allegedly quarantined farms.

On the third day of the drill (40 days for the purposes of the exercise), the technicians had performed all the tasks indicated for these cases for the purpose of reviewing the practical aspects of diagnosis, investigation, biosafety and ASF contention, and the eradication works had started.

The objective to trigger the coordination and follow-up from all federal parties, including the armed forces the National Guard and local governments, to mitigate and eliminate the risk, in accordance with the internationally established procedures to face an emergency in an specific geographical area.

Finally, the social communications plan for the press and social network and the disclosure plan to keep informed the Mexican productive sector about the

SENASICA's actions to contain and eradicate the threat and give assurances to the society about the protection of their food and public health were implemented and assessed.