

African swine fever and detection dogs for wild boar carcasses

This is part of a broader study on the possibilities for deploying detection dogs to locate wild boar carcasses in the event of an outbreak of African swine fever (by Hilde Vervaecke and Manon De Meester, Odisee University of Applied Sciences, Belgium; steering committee members: Uta Kielau, Ellen Van Krunkelsven, Kristof Baert, and Arno Thomaes).



Report 1. Analysis of dog breeds that are internationally most frequently deployed for detection

Information on dog and handler selection and useful criteria was screened in different sources:

1. **Literature study** of some peer-reviewed publications on the selection of detection dogs, mostly for eco-detection.
2. Information from **protocols**, reports and related materials on the training and deployment of detection dogs for African swine fever. A selection of German protocols was used to this goal.
3. Information from a **survey, interviews** and conversations with people experienced in detection dogs training, deployment, or governmental management, focused primarily on African swine fever.

The sources used in this work include both peer-reviewed scientific literature and grey literature (e.g. protocols, reports, and expert consultations). While peer-reviewed publications provide scientifically validated evidence, grey literature and expert input primarily offer practical and contextual insights and should be interpreted accordingly.

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LITERATURE STUDY

Dog breeds

Dahlgren et al. (2012) have emphasized the value of considering a dog breed's original working function, as this has influenced certain motivational traits. For instance, a Setter might be more adept at detecting a live bird compared to a Shepherd, but it may also exhibit a stronger hunt/chase drive.

In their review of important traits for detection dog selection for conservation purposes, Beebe et al. (2016) advise against selecting dogs solely based on their breed background, as there is considerable individual variation within breeds.

Grimm-Seyfarth et al (2021) reviewed the breeds used in different countries and for various targets, by analysing a database of 1,220 publications, including 916 scientific ones. They concluded that certain breeds have been preferably used for specific tasks and target, on different continents. Most breeds belonged to the FCI classes Pointers and Setters, Spitz and primitive types, Retrievers, Flushing dogs and Water dogs, Scent hound, and Sheepdogs and Cattle dogs. However, no specific breeds were found to be generally better suited for detection tasks. Only for arthropod, it was found that Pinshers and Schnauzers performed worse than other breeds. Further, terriers did less often outperform other monitoring methods, particularly for mammal detection.

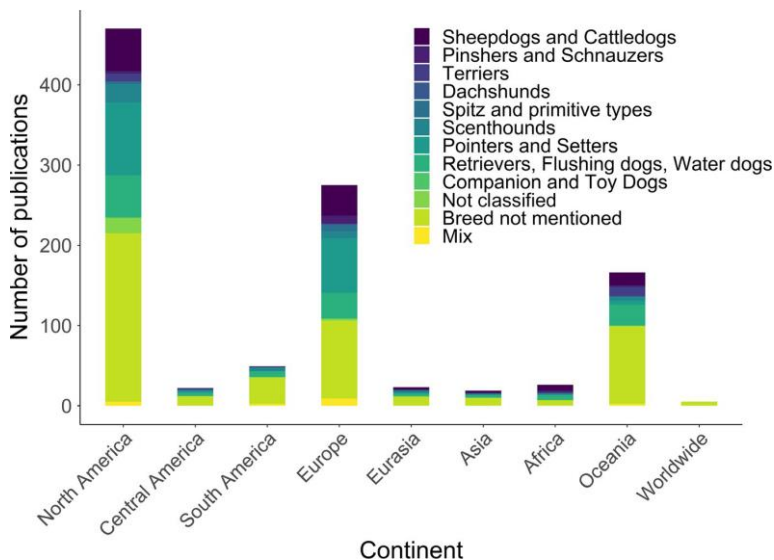


FIGURE Number of scientific references per continent separated by FCI dog breed classes. 'not classified'—a breed mentioned that is not listed in the FCI classification; 'Mix'—the publication only mentions a mixed breed but no assignment to a specific breed could be made. (In: Grimm-Seyfarth et al., 2021)

Criteria for the selection of detection dogs

Existing organizations have adapted selection methods from other fields, with limited published information on their effectiveness. Selection should ideally be done under the guidance of an experienced professional (Beebe et al., 2016).

Martin et al. (2020), surveyed 50 handlers of 10 countries working with human remains detection dogs. They found that handlers select their dogs by focusing on behavioural traits while neglecting anatomical features, which may actually also be important. Beebe et al. (2016) categorize the desired

traits for conservation detection purposes broader as **olfactory** abilities, next to other **biological**, **psychological**, and **social** traits.

Biological traits

Working and sporting dog breeds are commonly used in conservation detection due to their robust **morphologies**, which support performance in challenging environments, extended search durations, and adverse weather.

Size: Medium to large-sized dogs are often preferred, as extreme sizes can limit stamina or mobility. In some areas, larger dogs may appear as less achievable prey to predators. Larger dogs may have an easier time moving through downed timber or over boulders but may have a harder time moving through a low, thick bush or across some types of substrate (Hurt et al., 2016)

Coat: Coat length and type may also influence suitability, with short or thermally protective coats being advantageous in harsh terrains (review Beebe et al., 2016). The Brownell–Marsolais scale for dog selection, includes morphological features (e.g., breed, size, health) and motor capabilities (e.g., agility, athleticism, and stamina) in candidate detection dogs (Brownell and Marsolais, 2002).

The varied environments where dogs are likely to work should also inform the choice of dogs, including size, coat type, and temperament. In many areas, a double- or thicker-coated dog may be less heat tolerant but may be more resistant to ectoparasites and biting insects (Hurt et al., 2016).

Selective breeding for scent work has led to morphological traits that enhance olfaction, such as **large ears, dewlaps, and elongated noses** with expanded nasal cavities housing high numbers of odour receptor cells (ORCs). Large ears and dewlaps allow a dog to catch more volatile molecules focusing the scent around the nose. Bloodhounds have the most ORCs but are rarely used in conservation detection; instead, breeds like Shepherds, Retrievers, Collies, and Setters are more common (Dahlgren et al., 2012).

Olfactory behaviour

In scent detection work there are three search types: air-scenting, in which the nose of the dog is held in the air “sniffing” to catch scent on the wind; tracking, where the nose is held close to the ground, following the scent and direction of the target; and, trailing, in which dogs use a combination of air-scenting and tracking techniques (Syrotuck, 1972). Game dogs can air-scent effectively under strenuous conditions (Steen et al., 1996). Olfactory acuity is greatest during sniffing, as each nostril samples spatially distinct odours and nasal airflow enhances detection (Craven et al., 2009). However, current assessment tools often ignore breed-specific scenting tendencies, such as natural air-scenting in Spaniels (Beebe et al., 2016)..

Visual and auditory acuity

Conservation detection dogs (CDDs) require baseline visual acuity to navigate complex environments, particularly when detecting live wildlife. While visual cues aid humans more with large targets, dogs perform equally well with both large and small targets (Goodwin et al., 2010). In rhino scat detection (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*), dogs accurately identified the area, but humans visually located the dung more quickly; dogs continued to rely on olfaction even when dung was visible (Brook et al., 2012). Auditory acuity also supports effective dog-handler communication, and dogs with adequate visual and auditory function are presumed capable of satisfactory performance (Beebe et al., 2016).

Psychological traits

First, let us define some terms that will be employed later on.

- Temperament: generalized behavioural style present from birth and primarily influenced by genetic predisposition.
- Personality: while functionally similar to temperament, results from the combined effects of genetics and life experiences, shaping a dog's characteristic responses to various situations.
- Behaviour: refers to a dog's moment-to-moment responses, which generally reflect underlying personality traits but are also influenced by situational factors (Ley and Bennett, 2007).

Individual psychological differences influence working dog performance, even with similar biological traits. Studies emphasize the importance of assessing specific psychological traits in conservation detection dogs (CDDs) (Dahlgren et al., 2012). There can be pronounced individual differences in detection accuracy, despite similar training (Kerley et al., 2007; O'Connor et al., 2012). These differences may stem from factors like personality, nerve strength, and motivation (Beebe et al., 2016). Terminology inconsistencies in the literature make trait identification difficult (Ley & Bennett, 2007)

Jones & Gosling (2005) proposed seven broad temperament categories to standardize assessment. Svartberg (2002) suggested a *boldness–shyness index* as a predictor of working success. They included *sociability toward strangers*, *playfulness*, *interest to chase*, *exploration*, and fearlessness as evidence of **boldness**. Boldness may be a particularly important trait in successful completion of working tasks. This is because individuals with low boldness scores are more fearful, anxious, and easily distracted. Thus, they take longer and often require different training methods to become successful in working tasks, or may never be successful despite intensive training.

Boldness expressed as sociability toward strangers, playfulness, interest to chase, exploration and fearlessness may be beneficial in working tasks. Nerve strength, the response to novel stimuli, is critical for working in unpredictable environments.

Several commonly used assessment tools for scent detection dogs evaluate this trait, which is closely related to boldness and reflects a dog's behavioural response to unfamiliar stimuli—such as tactile, auditory, or visual cues—at a given moment. For instance, the Brownell–Marsolais scale (Brownell and Marsolais, 2002) frequently applied in the assessment of search and rescue (SAR) and disaster detection dogs, tests reactions like fear, curiosity, or anxiety when exposed to novel stimuli. These responses help determine a dog's suitability for specific detection tasks.

In the context of conservation detection, **tactile nerve strength— which measures a dog's response to unfamiliar surfaces and spaces** - is particularly critical. Auditory nerve strength, reflecting reactivity to unexpected/unfamiliar sounds, also plays a key role. These traits may indicate a dog's capacity to perform effectively in unfamiliar or dynamic environments, often referred to as environmental stability. Although *nerve strength* is relevant to conservation detection work, given the complexity and variability of such environments, it *might be less critical for conservation tasks* compared to roles in military or police work (Hurt & Smith, 2009).

While assessments used for SAR, disaster, and cadaver dogs could potentially be adapted for evaluating prospective conservation detection dogs (CDDs), the diverse and unpredictable nature of conservation environments presents unique challenges. A standardized tool to measure visual, auditory, or tactile nerve strength specifically for CDDs, is needed (review Beebe et al., 2016).

Drives: In a review of studies that provide information on CDD (conservation detection dog) selection, 80% stated **food or play drive** as selection criteria. Brownell and Marsolais (2002), divided drives into six categories: social (pack); play; food; prey; hunt; and defence. They proposed that drive-testing should be a critical part of the assessment process when selecting a dog for disaster/SAR (search and rescue) scent work, as drives are thought to be strongly associated with sustained search intensity and trainability. The similar working requirements of SAR (search and rescue) and CDDs, including the requirement for *sustained working motivation over several hours in*

challenging environments, suggests that the Brownell–Marsolais drive test may be applicable to selection of dogs for conservation scent detection (cfr appendix). The unique ecosystems in which CDDs are sometimes required to work may mean that the existing test needs to be modified for use in this context.

Clear benefits of selecting dogs which demonstrate excessive food/play drives for scent detection roles have consistently been reported in the scientific literature (review Beebe et al., 2016). In cadaver detection dogs, object obsession is associated with decreased distractibility and increased trainability (Dorriety, 2007). The latter traits are associated with scent detection dog success (Dorriety, 2007; Maejima et al., 2007). The importance of a strong object/food obsession relates to the required association between the target scent and an object of intrinsic pleasure for the dog. The importance of food/play drive is thought applicable across all fields of scent detection, as it facilitates scent detection training and sustained motivation during searching.

It is less clear how the other drives such as **prey, hunt, and search drives** apply in the specific context of conservation work. Dogs with high prey drive may be unsuited to live wildlife detection, due to the *potential for harm* to be caused *to the target species* (Cablk and Heaton, 2006). In natural ecosystems they may be easily distracted by non-target scents. In regions where small mammals are abundant, or where there are large numbers of ungulates or other wildlife, it may be necessary to employ a dog with a very low prey drive (Hurt et al., 2016). On the other hand, a *strong prey/hunt drive may aid in sustained attention to the work* (Hurt and Smith, 2009). Desired levels of prey, hunt, and search drives are not well defined or addressed in existing tools. In our interviews with trainers successes were reported of manageable prey drive after training. More research is needed on this issue as prey drive is often considered to be a major argumentation against the use of CDD's in wildlife areas.

Sociability or pack drive is the ability of a dog to cooperate with a handler, and to work in the presence of unfamiliar dogs or humans without exhibiting anxiety, fearfulness, or aggression. This may be more or less important in different contexts.

Given the complexity of predicting success based on multiple factors, different authors summarize the traits required for detection dog selection differently: Lazarowski et al. (2020) summarize the desired traits for explosive detection dogs (EDD's), falling into three broad functional categories: **detection-related traits** (e.g., odour-guided searching), **trainability** (e.g., reward motivation, sociability), and **environmental soundness** (e.g., emotional reactivity, fearfulness, arousal). Since explosives have no intrinsic interest to dogs, strong odour-driven behaviour and high reward value are critical for building reliable detection responses. Toys are often preferred reinforcers, and high toy drive may correlate with strong search motivation. Successful EDDs must remain engaged and focused even in distracting or low-target environments, yet also be responsive to handler cues. Balancing independence with trainability is especially important. Environmental soundness is important, maintaining optimal arousal that is focused and task-directed. Fearfulness toward social or non-social stimuli can be problematic in urban operations.

Sandor et al., 2025 summarize the main criteria that were reported by various authors when selecting which dog to train for detection as: search abilities, trainability, desire to work, concentration, independence, work effort, olfactory capacities and behaviours such as fear of cars and noise (Sinn et al., 2010; Beebe et al., 2016; Otto et al., 2019; Bray et al., 2021). They underline however the individual differences between dog breeds and among individual dogs (Sandor et al., 2025).

Hurt et al (2016) state that a strong willingness to work and the capacity to disregard distractions are key selection criteria for detection dogs across disciplines. Having a high play drive, intense

concentration, and both the ability and motivation to collaborate closely with their handler are helpful traits (Hurt et al., 2016).

Most dogs, trained or untrained dogs, hunting breeds or other breeds, look for decomposing cadaver when moving in the field. Only exceptionally will untrained dogs report the found cadaver to the handler. In a Czech study (Havránek et al., 2020) the speed of dogs with no special training to search for swine carcasses was quantified. One group consisted of 15 dogs of hunting breeds that passed standard hunting tests, the other group of 15 dogs of different breeds including mixed breeds without hunting tests. A comparison of both groups showed that trained hunting dogs reached a higher average (8.21 vs. 4.51 km/h) and maximum speed (18.8 vs. 11.45 km/h) in the field. During the trips, the dogs carried cameras that recorded video and registered GPS coordinates. If it is required that the dogs show consistent alert behaviour when reporting a found carcass, a special training is needed, lasting 4–6 months, according to Havránek et al. (2020). Next to indication/alert behaviour, operational deployment requires consistent search behaviour, a reliable proximity to the handler and full control of the dogs' game drive. Kruszyński et al. (2026) indeed found that hunting dogs (in their study, this term refers to the function of the dogs i.e. dogs that are used for hunting and that were not trained for detection, not to the breeds) are considerably less efficient than trained detection dogs in finding wild boar carcasses in Poland (see also report 2). They conclude that breed is not the crucial factor, but rather in how they are trained and utilized. When hunting dogs are used in environments rich in wildlife, they may have a strong instinct to chase and corner encountered prey, abandoning their search task. When search activities need to be interrupted until the dog either returns on its own or can be found, the search is prolonged and the confidence in the overall outcome will be diminished. In contrast, dogs trained exclusively to locate dead wild boar work directly in service of humans will be more motivated by handler-provided rewards such as food or toys, rather than by hunting instincts, according to Kruszyński et al. (2026).

Our conclusion: Good functioning of olfactory senses and baseline functioning of visual and auditory senses are required for detection work. Strong motivation and intense food or play drives are frequently highlighted as important traits for detection dogs in the literature. Nerve strength may facilitate working in unfamiliar contexts but seems less critical for conservation detection. Prey drive may positively aid in maintaining sustained attention to the task but carries the risk of harming the target species. Since no specific breeds were found to be generally better suited for detection tasks and detection trainability, breed selection is generally seen as less important given the substantial individual differences within breeds.

Test for selection of detection dogs

Lazarowski et al., 2021 validated a behavioural test for predicting puppies' suitability as a detection dog. The test was designed to assess behavioural domains considered important for the performance of a detection dog, including searching ability, motivational variables, and emotional stability. The performance on the test as early as three months predicted dogs' selection for operational detection roles at the completion of training. Emotional reactivity testing at three months old was predictive of detection dog working status at three years old (Lazarowski et al., 2023) (cfr. Test in appendix)

Selection of handlers

Training and conditioning practices can differ and result in different outcomes. The competence of the trainer—who may also act as the handler—will affect the dog's performance during training (Johnen et al., 2013, 2017; Beebe et al., 2016)).

For conservation fieldwork, handlers must have the appropriate traits and skills to accurately interpret canine behaviour, respond promptly and appropriately, and effectively guide the dog. They

also should have strong observational abilities and, ideally, a background in biology. Such expertise helps them recognize the value of collected samples, distinguish between species-specific signs, and communicate effectively with project staff. They should also be proficient in navigation and comfortable traveling through remote backcountry areas, with the confidence to return to base or camp without difficulty. Beyond managing a dog in challenging environments, handlers must be physically capable of negotiating obstacles—such as fallen logs, streams, or dense habitats—while ensuring the dog’s safety (Beebe et al., 2016).

Because both handlers and dogs bring unique personalities and working styles, pairing them appropriately is essential for building an effective team. Poor training or mismatched handler-dog pairs can significantly diminish detection performance (Hurt et al., 2016).

The handler plays a significant role in shaping a detection dog’s effectiveness (Lazarowski et al., 2020). A certain level of dog handling expertise is required before undertaking the training necessary to work with CDDs. A handler’s expertise is vital, as they must guide the search, communicate appropriately with the dog, and accurately interpret as well as reward the dog. Different levels of experience among handlers can lead to variation in detection success, even when the target and working conditions are comparable. Furtado et al. (2008) describe how two experienced dog-handler teams had an 81% accuracy rate (scats of jaguar and puma), while an inexperienced dog-handler team collected 50% non- target species. Inexperienced handlers may reward incorrect dog behaviour, and may be less capable of directing dog searches in accordance with environmental conditions, and more likely to reward dogs too early or on the wrong scent, inadvertently reducing detection accuracy and success (Furtado et al., 2008).

PROTOCOLS

Table: Information on dog selection from several German protocols for training and certification:

Land area or organisation	Specific breeds?	Selection handler	Selection criteria	Procedure
Baden-Württemberg TCRH	No	Yes, Stamina and physical condition General impression of the teams including teamwork skills and openness to new training methods, which may differ from those used so far.	Cynological assessment of the dog (constitution, physical condition, musculoskeletal system, motor suitability, general health appearance. Bond between dog and handler Terrain mobility and dealing with environmental influences Stamina and physical condition Curiosity and activity (can be motivated either by treats or toys)	Written questions Observation Interview
Mainfranken	No	physically and mentally suitable for ASP cadaver detection dogs, social competencies, such as teamwork.	dog must be naturally suitable, healthy, and physically capable. Have a good sense of smell and be able to work under stress. Dog should be energetic, eager to learn, highly motivated, and possess	

		Keep, train, and handle the dog in an animal-appropriate and welfare-compliant manner. Must be able to recognize signs of stress or overwork in their dog.	a strong play drive. A well-developed social behaviour towards both dogs and humans is required. Dog must be reliably recallable. Dogs known to engage in poaching or have previously poached uncontrollably will be excluded.	
Bavaria	No, all dog breeds are generally allowed	Dog and handler must be physically and mentally capable of searching for wild boar carcasses in difficult terrain over an extended period. Handler must recognize signs of the dog's overexertion.	The dog must have good basic obedience, be environmentally stable and sociable, and have the willingness to work actively during the search. The dog must be reliably recallable. Dogs known to hunt or have hunted uncontrollably in the past are excluded from training.	
Niedersachsen Same as Baden - Württemberg, TCRH	No	knowledge of operational structures and tracking technology, availability	constitution, motivation, obedience	Conversation test
Sachsen-Anhalt			physically and mentally capable of searching for wild boar carcasses in difficult terrain over an extended period of time.	
Schleswig-Holstein	No, dog does not have to be a hunting dog		clinically healthy	pass a pre-examination selection
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	all dog breeds are admitted to training, preferably hunting breeds.	Handlers should hold a valid hunting license. Be capable to stand physical and mental strain over a longer period,	Capable to stand physical and mental strain over a longer period, capable of performing free area searches, socially compatible with humans and other dogs, environmentally stable, and gun steady.	

TCRH: A wide variety of breeds and mixed breeds are presented to us. Depending on origin and predisposition, the approach to successful training is quite different. We do not follow a pre-shaped path, but rather one that is individually adapted to the dog and handler. The path itself is the goal (Handbuch ASP Kadaversuche, 2022).

SURVEY AND INTERVIEWS

A survey was distributed in Germany between March and June 2025. 45 respondents started the survey. In the survey, following answers regarding their dog breed for ASF-deployment was provided (n respondents for this question: 33):

What breed is/are your dog(s)?	N	%
Labrador	6	18
German wirehaired or shorthaired	3	9
Bayerischer Gebirgsschweißhund	3	9
Brandlbracke	3	9
German shepherd	2	6
Malinois	2	6
Border Collie	2	6
Mischling	2	6
Other (30%)		
Golden Retriever	1	3
Großer Münsterländer	1	3
Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever	1	3
Irish setter	1	3
Australian Shepherd	1	3
Teckel	1	3
Husky	1	3
Petite Bleu de Gascogne	1	3
Cão Fila De São Miguel	1	3
Boston Terrier	1	3

Following traits were considered to be important for a good boar carcass detection dog (n respondents = 18).

	Highly wanted	Neutral / does not matter	Not wanted
Search drive	18	0	0
Not too sensitive to pain	4	13	1
Obedience	15	2	0
Hunting Drive	1	10	8
Thick hairs to pass through brambles and bushes	4	14	0
High energy and drive	15	3	0
Brave enough to pass through difficult terrain	15	3	0
High legs and medium to large size	6	12	0
Play drive	7	11	0
Food drive	7	11	0

The two most important traits for a good boar carcass detection dog were:

- Joy in work, sensitivity, ability to differentiate
- Perseverance, strong will to find, obedience
- Can be motivated, persistent, robust (even with thorns, etc.)
- Similar to a rescue dog: search motivation, teamwork with the handler, persistence in working out a scent
- Good nose, cooperation with the handler, not too fast
- High motivation to search, endurance, cooperative with the handler
- Obedience, strong will to find, scenting ability
- Will to find
- Will to find, toughness in terrain, endurance
- Can be motivated, resilient in moving through difficult terrain
- Independent drive to search and find
- Motivation to work in a team with the handler
- Will to find, teamwork with the handler, hardly any hunting instinct
- Strong will to find, endurance, sharpness toward game
- Recallability, motivation, and ability to handle terrain
- Enjoys the act of searching, not just finding (empty searches)
- Works with the human, not independently
- Healthy and athletic

If someone would start the training of a new dog on ASF, the dog handlers advised them following dog breeds as best suited for this task:

- Labrador, they are good working dogs
- BGS (Bavarian Mountain Hound)
- German pointing dogs, flushing dogs (good nose, trainability)
- It depends on the handler and their circumstances. All working dog breeds are suitable, but hunting breeds are harder to train due to their hunting drive
- Hunting dogs or herding dogs, see above: easy-to-handle breeds, with a medium search radius, good cooperation with humans, socially compatible with people and dogs
- Labrador, Bavarian Mountain Hound
- Bracke, strong will to find
- All 6 retriever breeds (working lines), pointing dogs, Malinois – all have strong working drive, manageable hunting instinct, willingness to cooperate with humans
- Border Collie
- Simply because I like this breed
- Working dogs / athletic dogs that want to search
- Bavarian Mountain Hound, excellent scent work and strong bond and teamwork with the handler
- Doesn't matter, simply medium to large size
- Dogs with suitable muzzle length and fitness
- Working dogs
- Large and small dogs alike can fully realize their potential if properly utilized

Interviews:

Dog handler (operational is ASF-searches, Germany, HL): The target odour is not complicated, for most dogs it is easy to find. Most dogs are either rescue dogs or hunting dogs. Different types of dogs are used: German pointers, Brack dogs, Bavarian Schweisshund, mountain dogs, Aussies, German shepherds, pointers. They must be capable of running through the forest and have a good nose. Brak-dogs are difficult: they must be trained very well so that they do not go hunting.

TCRH discussions and email (trainer, KUG):

For the selection of handlers, no medical certificate of physical fitness is required. Many more people want to participate as volunteer dog handlers, and there is a waiting list.

A personal interview is conducted for selection.

Factors considered include:

- The candidate's self-assessment and motivation for participating in the project
- Experience and prior knowledge
- Membership of a rescue organization (fire brigade, Red Cross, etc.)
- Handling of and familiarity with deployment tools such as GPS
- Availability

Additionally, the following data must be collected:

- Dog data: age, breed, vaccinations, microchip number
- Personal data: name, address, occupation, hobbies, age, place of residence

A practical assessment is conducted of:

- Condition of the dog
- Bond with the handler
- Team skills
- Interaction with other dogs
- Performance level

The dogs are examined by a physiotherapist for their gait. If there is any doubt, a veterinary certificate is requested.

What about hunting drive? Handlers who can read their dog well can be successful with hunting dogs. They need to be able to tell whether the dog is following a scent or actual game.

Subsequently, the statements are evaluated, and the individuals and dogs are categorized into four groups:

1. Not suitable
2. Can be reconsidered after meeting certain conditions
3. Suitable
4. Especially suitable

ASF-Trainer (PD), Belgium: During the observation of the Walloon team's training in 2025, there were four volunteers (female). The search dogs were: one Saarloos, two German Shepherds, and one Boxer crossbreed. The dogs were selected based on their search behaviour. The trainer has a Wirehaired dog (for AVP and biogas), a Springer Spaniel, and an English Cocker (for bats). He considers a regional spread in the teams' places of residence to be an advantage for potential operational deployment.

Interview German trainer (Uta Kielau): This trainer followed up an ASF-project in her State. It works with hunters that know the area. Usually they know how to use dogs. It would be quite useful to use the local hunters and their hunting dogs, because they know the place they live close by and they are highly interested in keeping their hunting areas clean. They are the first ones that get information about swine fever outbreaks. A group was formed. Some hunters that were very interested. The difficulties was that on the one hand, hunters can be bad dog handlers. It was hard bit train them, but they ended up with a group that was really good and the dogs switched well from hunting wild boar to looking for cadavers. It worked quite well. The next problem was that some of them expected to be paid as they did the work for the authorities, for the public interest. The main problem was to keep them willing to go on training without any ASF-outbreak around. Most of them kept on training, being motivated and they never knew what would come. Then the project was stopped by the Bundesland of Lower Saxony because they started a different concept. They used volunteers dog handlers and they excluded all hunting dogs. This is quite interesting because here is a place where you have two different concepts. This hunters group did not go operational, but it was a nice experience. It is advisable to talk to hunter's organisations. In case of an outbreak, you need a large amount of dogs, because dogs cannot work all day and every day a week. So you must swap the

teams. One experience in Germany is that they overwork the dogs. Handlers get tired. The areas are 203 to 400 hectares, sometimes larger, sometimes smaller.

Professional human cadaver dog trainer: The ideal breeds for cadaver-dogs that search for human remains are Springer Spaniels and working Labradors. German Shepherds and Malinois will also push through the bramble bushes, but only when they are in overdrive. He thinks hunting dogs will likely be better suited for wild boar detection than herding breeds. However, there is an important difference between a dog of a hunting dog breed that does not hunt and one that actively hunts and has experience with hunting. The latter group will be much more difficult to train. They need to unlearn something they were genetically selected for and have already been trained to do.

Qua uiterlijk kan een grote hond misschien het zwijn afschrikken in een confrontatie met een zwijn. Voor het zoekwerk is doorzetting en zoekdrift zeer belangrijk. Het is dus belangrijk om te starten met de selectie van mensen te selecteren op een hond die geschikt is. Er moet van bij de start getest worden of de honden oké zijn voor het trainingstraject.

De zoekstrategie is belangrijk. Moet hij kunnen reageren op de zoekgeur wanneer hij gewoon aan het wandelen is, of moet hij enkel op bevel kunnen zoeken, en dan ook zeer intensief zoeken? Dit is een belangrijk onderscheid. Wanneer de hond al wandelend nog de geur kan oppikken en erop kan reageren, kan het zoeken veel langer duren dan wanneer de hond enkel goed zoekt wanneer hij intensief zoekt na het zoekbevel te hebben gekregen.

Summary

- The selection of specific breeds is generally considered less important, as individuals of all breeds have performed satisfactorily in practice and there are inter-individual differences within all breeds.
- The majority of regions do not express a preference for certain dog groups.
- Dogs with high hunting drive and hunting experience need to unlearn this behaviour, which can be difficult.

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