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04 - Veterinary control programmes

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REPORT OF THE
"FOODBORNE ZONOSSES –SALMONELLOSIS"
SUB-GROUP TASK FORCE

Meeting of the Task Force for monitoring disease eradication in the Member states

Prague, Czech Republic

26-27 June 2008

Report of the meeting of *Salmonella* sub-group of the Commission' Task Force for monitoring animal disease eradication held in Praha, Czech Republic, 26-27 June 2008

Participants: see Annex I

Agenda: see Annex II

Introduction

This report is a short summary of the various informative presentations given during the third meeting of sub-group of Commission' Task Force for monitoring *Salmonella* eradication. The main aim of the meeting was to exchange views on presentations and open subsequent subgroup discussions on the details of execution of the *Salmonella* control programmes in breeding flocks and in laying hens of *Gallus gallus* implemented in the Czech Republic, as well as to give floor for presentations and subgroup discussions on the impact of biosecurity measures in the successful implementation of *Salmonella* control programmes in general.

Scope

The expert group meeting in Prague was the third of a planned series of meetings with the scope of initiating discussions on the details of implementation of the national *Salmonella* control programmes in poultry populations run in the Member States with the aim to share experiences, identify common obstacles as regards the implementation of the programmes, and to identify areas where further work and solutions would be sought.

The meeting encompassed the following subject presentations from the Member States.

The Czech control program in breeders – P. Satran/CZ

The Czech control program in layers – P. Satran/CZ

The role of biosecurity in the *Salmonella* control programmes in Spain – M.A. Esteban/ES

The role of biosecurity in flocks of laying hens kept in big houses – R. Davies/UK

Discussion sessions took place after each presentation, resulted in final discussion with common conclusions and recommendations see Annex II. The *Salmonella* laboratory and data capture systems were also demonstrated. The operating procedures were observed and discussed in detail.

Summary of measures outlined in the Czech control programmes

The Czech control programme in breeding flocks of *Gallus gallus* in compliance with Regulation EC No 2160/2003 has been implemented as from 2007. Results of the implementation of the Baseline Survey in a laying hens revealed a prevalence of 62.5% infected layer flocks in the Czech Republic. A summary of the Czech presentation of the layer control programme is attached as Annex III.

Following the presentations given by the host the subgroup discussed strengths and weaknesses the Czech control programmes in layers and breeders of *Gallus gallus*. Vaccination is compulsory in both breeders and layers, and vaccination coverage is 100% according to the data presented. Compensation is paid to poultry owners for the destruction or emergency slaughter of infected flocks as well as for expenses to cleaning and disinfection of premises following infected flocks. The costs of vaccines and compensation for birds, cleaning and disinfection of birds constitute a high level of expenditure of management of the control programmes.

The subgroup discussed the pros and cons of compensation elements of control programmes. It is a challenge to motivate industry and farmers to adhere to the control programmes. On one hand, it may be necessary to include compensation schemes at the initiation of control programmes in order to ensure the cooperation of industry and farmers, but on the other hand, compensation schemes do not necessarily stimulate farmers to improve biosecurity and prevent reintroduction of *Salmonella* in flocks. The subgroup felt that compensation schemes were valuable as an incentive to motivate farmers in the first phase of the implementation of a control programme, but that compensation should be reduced or be abolished at a later stage of the execution of a control programme in order to accelerate progress by stimulating farmers to take responsibility for the execution of the programme.

Routine sampling is carried out by the operator, while official sampling is done by the authority once a year. The subgroup discussed the sampling strategy for confirmatory sampling of flocks found positive by routine sampling. Confirmatory sampling should be carried out with at the same sampling strength as routine sampling. Laboratory examination of samples is well-organised and all samples are analysed by the State Veterinary Institute, either at the National Reference Laboratory (NRL) in Praha, or at two regional SVI laboratories working under the supervision of the NRL.

The coordination and collection of data is a difficult task. However, the Czech control programme has developed and implemented a strong, user-friendly internet-based solution that might be useful to be shared with other Member States.

Biosecurity

The subgroup continued the discussions on the role of biosecurity in control programmes, based on presentations from UK and Spain. The importance of biosecurity was highlighted, and its importance is widely accepted in particular due to the introduction of Avian Influenza in Europe. This has also a positive influence on farm biosecurity and prevention of introduction of *Salmonella* from outside sources.

Farm check lists used in Spain were examined. The check lists in Spain are used in connexion with a scoring scheme, and may form the basis for continuing biosecurity improvements. Especially if a minimum scoring level is implemented as a condition for compensation in case of *Salmonella* infected flocks. In Spain the poultry industry is probing the possibilities for insurance schemes covering losses to *Salmonella* infection. The implementation of farm biosecurity measures may also be a condition for payment of insurance.

Rodent control is a key factor in obtaining improvements in *Salmonella* control. If rodents are not controlled, they will act as a reservoir for *Salmonella* reintroducing infection to poultry houses restocked after cleaning and disinfection.

The subgroup will continue to collect and examine biosecurity and farm check lists, as more National *Salmonella* Control Programmes are examined. However, although a common code of hygiene practice may serve as a sensible framework, biosecurity measures have to be adapted to local conditions in order to be effective.

Finally, the subgroup wishes to thank to the Czech hosts for an effective organisation of the meeting at State Veterinary Institute Training Center in Praha, and to the meeting participants for informative and stimulating presentations and discussions on sharing experiences relevant to the implementation of *Salmonella* control programmes in poultry

ANNEX I

Participants

Governmental experts

Dr. Rob Davies, UK
Dr. Miguel Angel Martin Esteban, ES
Dr. Mogens Madsen, DK
Dr. Petr Satran, CZ

The European Commission (DG SANCO-Unit 04)

Dr. James Moynagh, Head of Unit 04
Dr. Sarolta Idei, veterinary administrator Unit 04

Host

Representatives from the State Veterinary Administration and State Veterinary Institute, Praha

ANNEX II

AGENDA

26 June 2008 – Day 1

Time	Item	Speaker
14:00-14:10	Introduction & tasks	Commission -Sarolta Idei
14.10-15:00	Experience and challenges on the execution of the <i>Salmonella</i> control programme in breeding flocks of <i>Gallus gallus</i> in the Czech Republic (Introduction of the control programme + challenges of its execution) Biosecurity measures	Host - Petr Satran
15:00	Break	
15:10-15:40	Questions and answers Observations relevant to the presentation	subgroup
15.40 - 16.10	Investigation of foodborne outbreaks by the public health authority	Representative of the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic
16:10	The role of biosecurity in the implementation of the <i>Salmonella</i> control programmes in Spain The role of biosecurity -discussions	Miguel Angel Martin Esteban subgroup
17.00	Closing of day 1	

27 June 2008 – Day 2

Time	Item	Speaker
8:30-9:20	Short visit to the NRL- <i>Salmonella</i>	Host
9:20-10:10	Situation of salmonellosis in laying flocks of <i>Gallus gallus</i> in the Czech Republic followed by discussions (Introduction of the control programme + challenges of its execution)	Host- Petr Satran
10:10	Break	
10.25-12.00	Flocks of laying hens of <i>Gallus gallus</i> kept in big houses The role of biosecurity	Rob Davies
12:00-12:40	Observations concerning the previous presentations Discussions on the role of biosecurity and the control of efficiency of disinfection in the execution of the control strategies Conclusions drawn on the implementation of biosecurity measures in the group	subgroup

ANNEX III

Czech National control programme for *Salmonella* in laying hens (*Gallus gallus*) producing table eggs

General

The implementation of the national control programme started in the Czech Republic since 1st January 2007. The reason for the start of the programme a year earlier was the epidemical situation in the holdings hens producing table eggs based on the prevalence study the incidence of *Salmonella* in laying hens producing table eggs, which was implemented in the Czech Republic in 2004/2005, in accordance with Commission Decision 2004/665/EC of 22 September 2004 concerning a baseline study on the prevalence of *Salmonella* in laying flocks of *Gallus gallus*. The baseline study indicated prevalence 62,5 % for SE and ST in the clean dataset.

The aim of the programme is to reduce prevalence of SE and ST according to Commission Regulation (EC) No 1168/2006. With regard to the target in 2008, the results of the baseline study, which was carried out according to the Commission Decision 2004/665/EC, are used as reference. On this account the prevalence of SE and ST of 62.5% detected during the study is considered as an initial rate of prevalence. Consequently, the reduction of percentage of positive laying hens' flocks to 37, 5% must be reached in the first year of the implementation of the programme.

The main measures are monitoring and control of commercial laying hens' flocks producing table eggs. The control programme is mandatory for all producers of table eggs. Eggs may be used for direct human consumption (i.e. as table eggs) only if they come from a laying flock covered by the National Control Programme for *Salmonella*.

Holdings in the Czech Republic are registered in the Database of Farms in accordance to the provisions of the law No. 154/2000, Breeding Act and corresponding Decree No. 136/2004 laying down details for identification of animals and their registration and registration of holdings and person established by Breeding Act.

The epidemiological unit is the flock, which is defined under Regulation (EC) No. 2160/2003. „Flock" means all poultry of the same health status kept on the same premises or in the same enclosure and constituting a single epidemiological unit; in the case of housed poultry, this includes all birds sharing the same airspace.

Each flock has unique identification number i.e. CZ 12345678-01/2008 (CZ - Czech Republic, 12345678 registration number of holding, 01 - numeric designation of the flock for each calendar year, 2008 - year in which the flock has been created.)

Sampling requirements are in accordance with sampling requirements laid down in part B of Annex II of Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council and in accordance with Commission Regulation (EC) 1168/2006.

Samples are taken by the operator in rearing flocks twice, in day old chicks and in pullets' two weeks before moving to laying phase or laying unit. In production period samples are taken at the age of 24 ± 2 weeks and every 15 weeks during the laying phase.

Official sampling is carried out by the regional veterinary administration responsible for the flock in question in one flock once per year, and/or at the age of 24 ± 2 weeks in laying flocks housed in buildings where *Salmonella* was detected in the preceding flock; and/or in all other laying flocks on the holding in case SE or ST are detected in one laying flock on the holding.

Samples taken by the operator and/or within this programme are examined only in laboratories of State Veterinary Institutes (SVI Prague – NRL, SVI – Jihlava, SVI – Olomouc). Activities of laboratories are co-ordinated by the National Reference Laboratory and the laboratories shall be linked with the Information System of the SVA CR as well. Laboratory testing for *Salmonella* spp. is carried out in accordance with the method recommended by the CRL in Bilthoven, Netherlands.

The method is a modification of ISO 6579 (2002), where a semi-solid medium (MSRV) is used as the single selective enrichment medium.

The laboratories record the examinations and results of the examinations of all samples in the Information System. Results of the examinations of all samples are sent by the laboratory to the relevant RVA (inspectorate), a copy thereof is sent to the farmer or private veterinarian. The RVA record all (official and operator) sampling and results of examinations in the SVA CR information system. Positive results for SE or S T are sent to State veterinary Administration.

In case of presence *S. Enteritidis* and/or *S. Typhimurium* the official veterinarian of the RVA shall carry out official sampling in the flock for the confirmation of the first results. Animals showing alterations of health status shall be selected in particular. Sampling of organs for the examination shall be carried out at the SVI in Prague; samples from liver, ovaries and intestines must be taken and examined for the presence of *Salmonella* spp. from each animal. Furthermore, the RVA shall issue preliminary emergency veterinary measures.

Pending the completion of the confirmatory examination, the relevant RVA shall order at least the following measures:

- a) performance of bacteriological examination of feed and water for the presence of *Salmonella* spp.;
- b) performance of thorough cleansing and disinfection, both in the hall and in other service premises (e.g. feed and litter stores);

In case of positive result of the confirmatory examination, the flock in question is considered as infected.

- c) when birds from infected flocks are slaughtered or destroyed, steps must be taken to reduce the risk of spreading zoonoses as far as possible.
- d) thorough cleansing and disinfection, including safe removal of faeces or litter must be performed after slaughtering or killing of poultry from infected flocks;
- e) table eggs coming from infected flocks may be used for human consumption only after their in a way ensuring that they are completely free of all *Salmonella* serotypes of public health relevance, in accordance with food hygiene legislation;

f) performance of further bacteriological examination of feed and water for the presence of *Salmonella* spp., if necessary.

Vaccination

Vaccination of poultry against *Salmonella Enteritidis* is obligatory within this programme. Vaccination of pre-laying pullets shall be performed during their rearing period, so as to the vaccination and re-vaccination are completed prior to the planned start of their laying period.

Financial assistance provided to operators in the context of National Control Programme

Farmers are compensated for costs of vaccines up to 6,- CZK (0,25€) per 1 vaccinated animal. Laboratory testing is paid from the state budget for samples taken by operators and for official samples.

Financial assistance provided to operators in the context of notifiable disease occurrence

Farmers are compensated for costs and losses connected with the detection of a *salmonellosis* of poultry which have arise as a result of enforcement of emergency veterinary measures pursuant to §67, §68 and §70 of Veterinary Act.

- a) costs of killing or emergency slaughter of diseased and suspect animals of susceptible species and of the safe disposal of their cadavers; where appropriate, the compensation shall be also provided for the safe disposal of their products, decontamination of water and feedingstuffs;
- b) for the animal killed for diagnostic purposes or animal which has undergone the emergency slaughter for diagnostic purposes;
- c) for the cleaning, disinsectization, deratization and disinfection of the holding and of its equipment.