SHORT REPORT
OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
(Section Animal health and welfare)
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 02-03 JULY 2002

President: Mr. Bernard Van Goethem
All the Member States were present.

1. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE EVOLUTION OF ANIMAL DISEASES IN THE COMMUNITY INCLUDING:

Classical swine fever

France
In regard to domestic pigs, the protection and surveillance zones around previously infected premises were all lifted from the 12 June. Currently France has no recorded outbreaks and no containment restrictions in place in domestic pigs due to CSF. The monitoring and surveillance on feral pig populations was continuing within dedicated zones.

Germany
The German delegation outlined the current CSF situation in the country. The six cases of CSF in domestic pigs in Rhineland-Palatinate reported at the last meeting had been controlled and disease had been inactivated. Control measures continue to be enforced in relation to a seventh case in Lower Saxony. Overall the disease situation in the south-western areas of German remained unsatisfactory and German authorities were taking appropriate measures to improve the situation.

Luxembourg
Since the last report, 4 new outbreaks have been recorded in domestic pigs. In addition to the restrictive measures established by Directive 2001/89/EC, Luxembourg is also enforcing certain movement restrictions. The neighbouring Member States expressed their concern about current situation.

In regard to feral pigs, 3 new cases of CSF have been detected. The whole of the Luxembourg territory is considered surveillance zone for CSF in wild boar. Movements of domestic pigs are subject to certification and clinical examination prior to transport.

Spain
The Spanish delegation distributed a situation update. No further outbreaks were recorded since the last report. The samples checked until 28 June are all negative. The restricted zone is reduced to the only comarca Osana. The Commission indicated that the measures in force referring to Osana expire on 31 July.

Swine vesicular disease
Italy

Member States were updated on the current outbreak in Italy. Under legal provisions set up on 7 June, no region of Italy with a confirmed outbreak of SVD could export porcine material to other Member States. Disease control and surveillance measures had also been adopted around all premises where sero-positive animals are found. Certain Member States expressed some concern about the current situation in Italy as regards SVD.

**Infectious haematopoietic necrosis**

Germany

Germany distributed and presented a report on the disease situation. Four new cases have been recorded, bringing the total number of outbreaks up to eight for 2002.

2. **INFORMATION ON THE ERADICATION PROGRAMMES FROM MS**

Member States concerned distributed and presented a report on the progress of the approved eradication and monitoring programme for rabies, enzootic bovine leukosis, bluetongue and sheep/goat brucellosis, giving an overview of the disease evolution and the measures in place:

- **Rabies**: Luxembourg, Austria and Finland
- **EBL**: Italy, Portugal
- **Bluetongue**: Spain, France and Italy
- **Sheep/goat brucellosis**: Spain, France, Italy and Portugal


The Danish delegation proposed amending the OIE guidelines to extend the level of testing required to ensure the absence of FMD infection prior to a country obtaining FMD-free status. The amendments were proposed because it was considered that much of the underlying test technology was in its infancy and the sensitivity of the tests had yet to be fully determined. Member States agreed that the guidelines should be updated to reflect current technology to ensure that OIE testing protocols do not become obsolete. Other Member States agreed to submit comments to the Commission on the suggested amendments from Denmark. If these were in favour of the amendments as proposed, the Commission would submit the comments to the Council, requesting that they are transmitted to the OIE.
4. **INFORMATION ON ERADICATION, CONTROL AND MONITORING PROGRAMMES SUBMITTED BY MEMBER STATES FOR THE YEAR 2003 (DOC. SANCO/10257/2002-REV.1)**

Following a series of bilateral meetings between the Commission and Member States in June, all Delegates received an information pack and accompanying CD-ROM outlining the 2003 eradication programmes submitted to the Commission from Member States.

5. **INFORMATION ON LOW PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA IN CHILE (DOC SANCO/10316/2002)**

During the course of the meeting, the Chilean authorities reported to the Commission that high pathogenic avian influenza had been isolated from poultry in Chile. Chile currently could not certify poultry products for export, and the Chilean authorities had given assurances that there would be no export of such products to any third countries, including the Member States. As a result, delegates did not initially consider it necessary to introduce additional safeguards to protect Member States from infection. However, this issue would be considered in the Council meeting attended by the Chief Veterinary Officers on 5 July.

The Commission also distributed update information on infections of poultry with LPAI in the USA.

6. **INFORMATION FROM SWEDEN CONCERNING AN OUTBREAK OF VIRAL HAEMORRHAGIC SEPTICAEMIA (VHS) IN A NON-APPROVED ZONE - RE-INFECTION IN AN EARLIER INFECTED FARM (SANCO 10296/2002)**

Member States noted the information from Sweden on the latest situation regarding VHS.

7. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM FINLAND CONCERNING THE FINNISH APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF AN ERADICATION PROGRAMME AGAINST VIRAL HAEMORRHAGIC SEPTICAEMIA (VHS) IN COASTAL AREAS OF FINLAND (DOC. SANCO/10297/2002 AND SANCO/10317/2002)**

Member States noted the information concerning new outbreaks of VHS in Finland and additional information concerning the application for approval of an eradication programme against VHS in coastal areas of Finland.

Finland outlined current progress on the implementation of the eradication programme against VHS. 12 disease outbreaks have been recorded in trout farms, and culling and other appropriate disease control measures had been taken. Although it was not clear if the programme would be effective, Finland reported
that farmers were motivated to reduce losses due to VHS and were keen to assist in the implementation of the programme.

8. **INFORMATION FROM MS ON THEIR IMPLEMENTATION OF ART 4 OF COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 95/70/EC INTRODUCING MINIMUM COMMUNITY MEASURES FOR THE CONTROL OF CERTAIN DISEASES AFFECTING BIVALVE MOLLUSCS - I.E. MONITORING AND SAMPLING PROGRAMME APPLIED IN MOLLUSC STOCKS (SEE SANCO/10123/2002)**

All Member States were reminded to complete the table outlining the results of disease monitoring and sampling within their mollusc populations. The results would be collated and the merits of further action to control disease would then be assessed.

9. **WORKING DOCUMENT FOR DISTRIBUTION AND DISCUSSION:**

"CHECKLIST and application form for Community application and approval for the status of approved zone with regard to viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) and infectious haematopoietic necrosis (IHN)" (SANCO 10298/2002)

Member States were invited to comment on the draft document with a view to approving the check list and application form at the next meeting in September.

10. **THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS WERE DISTRIBUTED FOR INFORMATION**

- Applications for achieving approved status of farms with regard to viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) and infectious haematopoietic necrosis (IHN): Germany (SANCO 10276 - 10281/2002); Austria (SANCO 10282/2002); France (SANCO 10283/2002; 10287 - 10290/2002); and Italy (SANCO 10291 - 10295/2002)

- Applications for achieving approved status of zones with regard to viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) and infectious haematopoietic necrosis (IHN): France (SANCO 639/2002 and 640/2002 - complete file distributed SVC March 2002; 10284 - 10286/2002) and Italy (SANCO 10299/2002)

11. **DISTRIBUTION (BY E-MAIL) FOR INFORMATION:**

- Final report of a mission carried out in Latvia from 25 February to 1 March 2002 in order to carry out a general evaluation of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and BSE-related measures (DG(SANCO/8518/2002)
• Final report of a mission carried out in Slovenia from 26 to 30 November 2001 in order to carry out a general evaluation of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and BSE-related measures (DG(SANCO/3350/2001)

• Final report of a mission carried out in the Slovak Republic from 21 to 25 January 2002 in order to carry out a general evaluation of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and BSE-related measures (DG(SANCO/8517/2002)

• Final report of a mission to Lithuania from 18 to 22 February 2002 concerning import controls (DG(SANCO/8558/2002)

12. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND POSSIBLE OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON A DRAFT COMMISSION DECISION ON THE EVOLUTION OF ANIMAL DISEASES IN THE COMMUNITY AND IN THIRD COUNTRIES.

The Commission introduced the following proposal:


In the light of the evolution of the epidemiological situation in the feral pigs in Germany it was proposed to extend the area where protection measures apply.

Vote: 77 votes in favour, 10 abstentions.


The Commission recalled that France had presented an eradication and surveillance programme for classical swine fever in wild boar in the departments Moselle and Meurthe-et-Moselle, following the confirmation of a case of CSF in a feral pig in Moselle on 22 April 2002. The Member States were presented a draft Decision approving the above eradication plan.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour.

Member States considered a draft proposal providing for submission for approval of programmes for the implementation of surveys for avian influenza in poultry and wild birds in accordance with the guidelines drawn up by the Community Reference Laboratory for avian influenza.

Some Member States expressed reservations about the timetable for implementation of the survey, particularly regarding the ability to generate funds for such a survey in such a limited time, and co-ordinate resources in order to submit final results to the Commission in September 2003. In addition, although Member States recognised the need to perform surveillance to assess the prevalence of avian influenza in bird populations, there was some concern expressed about the possible trade implications if surveillance suggested that the disease was prevalent within Member States.

**Vote: 69 votes in favour, 18 abstentions.**

The Commission distributed, for consideration, a *draft Decision approving the programmes for the implementation of Member States’ surveys for avian influenza (Doc. SANCO/10326/2002)*. The proposal would be presented for an opinion at the SCFCAH of 16-17 July 2002.


The purpose of the draft Decision was to lay down standard requirements for a harmonised reporting system enabling the evaluation of the progress of implementation of animal disease eradication and control programmes approved for co-financing by the EU.

Generally Member States were in favour of the text although Spain requested an explanation for the requirement to submit financial information from the Commission Financial services. The Commission made the following declaration:

"Le règlement (CE) 296/96 du 16 février 1996 concerne les dépenses du FEOGA section Garantie. Puisque les dépenses vétérinaires en question relèvent de cette section Garantie, les dispositions de l'article 4.2 de ce règlement y sont applicables."

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour.**

Member States considered a draft proposal to allow the importation, temporary admission and re-entry after temporary export of registered horses from certain provinces in Turkey on the proviso that appropriate health tests are carried out in approved laboratories.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour.**

17. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision establishing the animal health conditions and veterinary certification for the temporary admission of registered horses participating in the World Equestrian Games in 2002 (Doc. SANCO/10180/2002-rev.1)**

Member States considered a draft proposal for the health conditions required for the temporary importation of horses participating in the World Equestrian Games in Jerez, Spain in 2002, particularly in the regard to equine viral arteritis. Member States agreed that providing import certification included a declaration that all males horses capable of breeding left the EU without delay, and were not used for breeding during their visit, it was appropriate to wave the requirements.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour.**

18. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 93/693/EC as regards the list of semen collection centres approved for the export to the Community of semen of domestic animals of the bovine species from third countries (Doc. SANCO/10171/2002 – Rev.1)**

Members considered a draft decision to amend the list of approved collection centres for bovine semen in the Slovak Republic for export to the Community.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour.**
19. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 92/452/EEC as regards the lists of embryo collection teams and embryo production teams approved in third countries for export of bovine embryos to the Community (Doc. SANCO/10172/2002)**

Members considered a draft decision to amend the certification of a Canadian practise to include embryo production for subsequent export into the Community.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour.**

20. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision relating to the total amount of the Community’s financial aid in the framework of the eradication of classical swine fever in Spain in 1997 (Doc. SANCO/967/2002)**

The Member States were presented a draft Decision providing for the payment of the remaining amount of the Community’s financial assistance for the eradication of classical swine fever in 1997.

The vote was postponed.


The Member States were presented a draft Decision providing advance payment for the compensation to farmers for the compulsory slaughter carried out in the framework of the eradication of classical swine fever in Spain in 2001.

The vote was postponed.

22. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision relating to financial aid of the Community in the framework of the eradication of bluetongue in Spain in 2000 (Doc. SANCO/973/2002)**

The Member States were presented a draft Decision providing advance payment for the compensation to farmers for the compulsory slaughter carried out in the framework of the eradication of bluetongue in Spain in 2000.

The vote was postponed.
23. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision relating to financial aid of the Community in the framework of the eradication of bluetongue in France in 2000 (Doc. SANCO/974/2002)**

The Member States were presented a draft Decision providing advance payment for the compensation to farmers for the compulsory slaughter carried out in the framework of the eradication of bluetongue in France in 2000.

The vote was postponed.

24. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision relating to a request for information with the view to possibly grant financial aid of the Community in the framework of the eradication of bluetongue in Italy in 2001 (Doc. SANCO/975/2002)**

The Commission explained that Legal services had advised that the financing of the 2001 eradication programme for bluetongue in Italy did not need a Commission decision. Hence agreement for financial aid for this programme would be confirmed in a letter to the Italian authorities.

The point was therefore withdrawn from the agenda.

25. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision relating to a request for information with the view to possibly grant financial aid of the Community in the framework of the eradication of bluetongue in France in 2001 (Doc. SANCO/976/2002)**

France withdrew their request for financial assistance for the eradication of bluetongue in 2001. The item was therefore deleted from the agenda.


Members States considered a draft proposal to re-authorise imports of de-boned meat of bovine, ovine and caprine species, and farmed and wild ungulates from
certain specified regions of Botswana following the cessation of exports of such products due to an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in February 2002.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour.**


The Commission distributed and presented the above proposal for study and observation. The purpose of the draft Decision is to extend the list of notifiable diseases to include viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) and infectious salmon anaemia (ISA) in the ADNS system. The proposal also intends to separate outbreaks of classical swine fever in feral pigs from outbreaks in domestic pigs.


The Commission distributed and presented the above proposal for study and observation. It was proposed to replace the longitude and latitude reference with the Geographical Satellite Positioning System reference on the notification form to provide a more accurate record of the location of a recorded outbreak.


The Commission distributed and presented the above proposal for study and observation. In view of the positive outcome of the eradication plan for classical swine fever in the Province of Varese, Italy, Member States were presented a draft Decision to repeal an earlier decision approving the eradication plan.


The Commission distributed and presented the proposal for study and observation. The purpose of the draft Decision is to harmonise the certificates and import conditions for live animals and meat products and consolidate the existing legislation into one Decision. Member States suggested a number of amendments to the text, which would be revised before consideration at a future meeting.
31. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON A DRAFT COMMISSION REGULATION LAYING DOWN INTERIM SAFEGUARD MEASURES WITH REGARD TO PRODUCTS ENTERING THE COMMUNITY FROM THIRD COUNTRIES FOR PERSONAL CONSUMPTION AND LAYING DOWN CERTAIN RULES FOR CONTROLS OF SUCH PRODUCTS (DOC. SANCO/10148/2002-REV.4)

The Commission distributed and presented the proposal for study and observation. In the light of further preventing the introduction of infectious animal diseases, the Member States were presented a draft Regulation to specify and to restrict further the types and quantities of products of animal origin that, introduced into the Community under non-commercial traffic, can remain exempted from the veterinary controls and without posing a significant animal health risk. It is also proposed to lay down rules for the controls to be carried out at the points of entry into the Community, and for the information about these rules provided to travellers in support for these controls.

Delegates considered a revised draft Regulation. There was general agreement with the text, although some Member States expressed reservations about the legal basis on the proposed general controls for personal consignments, the limited specification on checks for compliance and where responsibility lay for certain costs associated with implementing the regulation. Member States agreed to consider the revised text and submit additional comments to the Commission.


Member States considered a draft Decision to amend animal health requirements to prevent the introduction of avian influenza subtypes H5 and H7, as they have been shown to mutate to become highly pathogenic following circulation in a given area.

Member States recognised the benefit from implementing the decision. However, there was some concern about the lack of information on the prevalence of avian influenza within Member States. Although a surveillance programme for avian influenza had been agreed, it was possible that Member States would be imposing a health requirement on importing Third Countries which could currently not be guaranteed to be met within the Community. This may have a detrimental effect on trade with Third Countries in the long term. The text would be revised prior to consideration at a future meeting.

The Member States were presented a proposal to add Botswana to the list of third countries authorised to export live ratites and hatching eggs to the EU following the successful evaluation of veterinary structures in Botswana, and the subsequent confirmation that avian influenza was now a notifiable disease under Botswana legislation. The draft decision also amended a previous error relating to the listing of the regions of Brazil which are authorised for exports of live ratites and hatching eggs to the Community.

34. **Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision drawing up a list of third countries and laying down the animal health conditions and certification requirements for imports of live molluscs, their eggs and gametes for further growth, fattening or re-laying and laying down the animal health conditions and certification requirements for imports of live molluscs intended for immediate human consumption or for further processing before human consumption (SANCO/10078/2002 Rev. 1)**

The Commission distributed and presented the above proposal for study and observation. The purpose of the draft Decision is to establish a list of third countries from which imports of live molluscs, their eggs and gametes are authorised for growth, fattening or re-laying in the Community. Furthermore, the proposal intends to lay down the animal health conditions for these imports and to supplement the import certificates already laid down in Directive 91/492/EEC for live molluscs with the appropriate animal health requirements. The Member States were also presented animal health import conditions and certification requirements for live molluscs intended for immediate human consumption or for further processing before human consumption.

Member States were requested to send in specific comments of the revised text to the Commission. These would then be collated and a decision made about the need to convene a further working group to discuss any additional issues.


The Commission distributed and presented the above proposal for study and observation. In order to take into account the OIE most recent publication, the Member States were presented a draft Decision to update the list of molluscs diseases, pathogens and sensitive species in Annex D to Directive 95/70/EC.
Member States agreed that experts from the National reference laboratories at their meeting in September should consider the classification of mollusc diseases where provisions for monitoring and disease control are applicable.


The Commission distributed and presented the above proposal for study and observation. The proposal intends to lay down sampling and diagnostic methods for the detection and confirmation of bonamiosis and marteiliosis in molluscs in the case of abnormal mortality and for the recognition of approved free zones and farms.


The Commission distributed and presented the above proposal for study and observation. The proposal intends (1) to establish the list of aquaculture animal species not susceptible to and not responsible for transmission of the diseases bonamiosis and marteiliosis, and (2) lay down the animal health conditions and the model of the accompanying document for the introduction of these species.

38. **MISCELLANEOUS**

   (1) The Netherlands informed the Committee about the detection of residues of MPA in feed mixture for piglets.

   (2) The Commission reminded the Member States that information on vaccination against African horse sickness should be included in the certificate.
N.B. The proposals on which the Committee expressed an opinion are subject to a defined procedure in relation to the formal adoption by the Commission.

Mission reports are available on the Internet at the following address: http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/inspections/vi/reports/index_en.html

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