SUMMARY RECORD
OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
(Section Animal health and welfare)
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 05 FEBRUARY 2003

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 in the wild boar**

   **Belgium**
   The Belgian delegation distributed and presented the results of the surveillance programmes in wild boar in 2002 carried out in the infected area and in the observation zones. From the 716 wild boar sampled, one was found virologically positive and 21 were found serologically positive.

   **France**
   The French delegation presented an update report of the surveillance for classical swine fever in the wild boar in the northeast of France, providing data from April 2002 to January 2003. Unlike Germany and soon Luxembourg, France is not vaccinating and therefore stressed the need for a cross-border cooperation to ensure co-ordination of hunting activities and control measures in the border areas.

   **Germany**
   Germany presented an update of the CSF situation in the wild boar, indicating that 20 cases have been registered in Rhineland Palatinate.

   Member States were also presented a concluding evaluation of CSF eradication in wild boar in the federal states Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Brandenburg, Baden-Württemberg and Saxony-Anhalt after oral immunisation and fading out of CSF (Doc. SANCO/10082/2003). In conclusion, the representative stated that the diagnostic results demonstrate that these four Länder could be declared free of CSF and that on that basis the disease control measures in place in these areas, including the ban on moving pigs, their semen, embryos or ova for intra-Community trade could be lifted.

   **Luxembourg**
   Luxembourg distributed the document in relation to the oral report on the classical swine fever situation in wild boar that was presented at the SCFCAH of 14-15 January 2003. From the 2504 samples analysed in 2002, 65 showed
positive virology and 601 were seropositive. The whole of the territory of Luxembourg is considered infected zone and trade restrictions are maintained.

At the 14-15 January 2003 session of the SCFCAH, the delegate had also expressed the intention to have recourse to vaccination. As a follow-up, Luxembourg presented the plan for emergency vaccination of feral pigs against CSF (Doc. SANCO/10079/2003). See also point 10b.

2. INFORMATION ON THE ERADICATION PROGRAMMES FROM MS

Poseidom: France → presentation postponed

Bluetongue:
Member States concerned presented a report on the progress of the approved eradication and monitoring programmes for bluetongue, giving an overview of the disease evolution and the measures in place. Spain and Italy distributed a written report. France reported orally (no cases of bluetongue, continued monitoring of virus circulation).

2A. INFORMATION ON THE ERADICATION PROGRAMMES FROM MS

Bluetongue: Greece
Greece gave an oral overview on the bluetongue situation reporting the confirmation of 83 clinical outbreaks in Autumn-Winter 1998 and 174 clinical outbreaks in the period Summer-Winter 2001. There had been no evidence of virus circulation in the last 14 months. The Greek delegation therefore requested the Commission to consider lifting the restriction measures or improving the bluetongue status of Greece.

The Commission said that considering the absence of virus circulation it could be envisaged to re-allow movements of serologically negative animals from mainland Greece. Member States seemed to agree to this approach.

3. INFORMATION ON LOW PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA IN ITALY (DOC. SANCO/10085/2003)

The Italian delegation presented an update report on the low pathogenic avian influenza situation. To date, 246 outbreaks have been confirmed of which 55 in Lombardia, 189 in Veneto and 2 in Emilia Romagna. The delegate also provided more detailed information on the vaccination campaign which was started on 10 December 2002. Data on the distribution of homologous and heterologous vaccines were presented.

4. INFORMATION ON THE SITUATION IN RELATION TO NEWCASTLE DISEASE IN THE USA

Postponed, see SCFCAH of 7 February 2003.
5. **INFORMATION AND "TOUR DE TABLE" ON PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN INTRA-COMMUNITY TRADE OF LIVE POULTRY IN RELATION TO THE PROVISIONS OF DIRECTIVE 92/117/EEC AND POSITIVE FINDINGS FOR SALMONELLA**

One Member State had encountered certain problems in intra-community trade of hatching eggs which appeared to be contaminated with salmonella Enteritidis. In this respect, the Member State concerned wanted to introduce certification in relation to trade of live poultry and hatching eggs.

Before taking the Member States’ views on the subject the Commission, for the sake of clarity, reminded the Committee of the minimum requirements laid down in Directive 92/117/EEC as regards zoonotic salmonella in relation to intra-community trade of live poultry and hatching eggs, applicable in all Member States. The provisions of the Directive do not require the use of certification in this matter.

It appeared from the “tour de table” that no majority could be found in favour of the introduction of certificates for intra-community trade.

Norway indicated that according to EEA Committee Decision no 69/98 concerning the amendment of Annex I to the EEA agreement, the following Salmonella additional guarantees also apply to Norway: Commission Decisions 95/160/EC, 95/161/EC, 95/410/EC.

6. **SWINE VESICULAR DISEASE POLICY - WHICH OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE (SEE DOC. SANCO/10708/2002-REV1, ALREADY DISTRIBUTED ON 14 JANUARY)**

In general, the Member States agreed that option C presented in the working document was the right way to proceed. The discussion will be pursued in a working group.

7. **INFORMATION ON FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE IN BOTSWANA (DOC SANCO/10080/2003)**

The Commission distributed update information on the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Botswana. This report also contained a request for regionalisation.

8. **INFORMATION TO BELGIUM ON AN ADDITIONAL REIMBURSEMENT TO BE MADE IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THEIR 2001 RABIES ERADICATION PROGRAMME**

The Commission informed Belgium about an additional payment to be made in relation to their 2001 rabies eradication programme, due to an earlier miscalculation.
9. **INFORMATION TO SPAIN ON AN ADDITIONAL REIMBURSEMENT TO BE MADE IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THEIR 2001 BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS ERADICATION PROGRAMME**

The Commission informed Spain about an additional payment to be made in relation to their 2001 bovine tuberculosis eradication programme, following the receipt of additional information from Spain.

10. **DISTRIBUTION FOR INFORMATION / DISTRIBUTION POUR INFORMATION:**

- Final report of a mission to the Slovak Republic from 14 to 18 October 2002 concerning import controls (DG(SANCO)/8683/2002)

- Final report of a mission carried out in Slovenia from 23 September to 4 October 2002 in order to review the strategy of the Slovenian authorities for the up-grading of certain classes of food processing establishments and to review associated live animal and animal welfare controls (DG(SANCO/8653/2002)

10A. **INFORMATION FROM BELGIUM AND THE UNITED KINGDOM ON INFECTIOUS BOVINE RHINOTRACHEITIS (IBR) OUTBREAKS IN A SEMEN COLLECTION CENTRE APPROVED UNDER COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 88/407/EEC**

**Belgium**

Belgium reported an outbreak of IBR in an artificial insemination centre. Based on positive results obtained during routine testing, all animals were tested. As a result, 22 sero-positive bulls were identified. All semen collected since 1 December 2002 was destroyed.

**United Kingdom**

The United Kingdom reported an outbreak of IBR in an insemination centre detected during private tests. From the close contact bulls, 8 were found positive. The EU approval of the centre has been suspended. The semen collected is held in a quarantine store. The infection was probably introduced end November 2002. Investigations are ongoing.

The Commission emphasised that the products collected after the last negative test of the sero-positive bulls should be withdrawn from trade. The UK was invited to provide information on the destination of dispatched semen.

10B. **INFORMATION FROM LUXEMBOURG ON THE PLAN FOR EMERGENCY VACCINATION OF FERAL PIGS AGAINST CLASSICAL SWINE FEVER IN LUXEMBOURG**

Luxembourg presented the plan for oral emergency vaccination of feral pigs against CSF (Doc. SANCO/10079/2003) and asked for Commission approval. See also point 1.
11. 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.

No items raised.


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.

The Committee reached a technical agreement (one Member State abstained). The draft Decision will be submitted to the WTO for comments under the SPS Veterinary agreement.

13. Exchange of views and possible technical opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision establishing the list of third countries from where Member States are authorised to import live equidae and semen, ova and embryos of the equine species, amending Decision 94/63/EC (SANCO/10168/2002 rev 6)

See also point 12.

The draft Decision presented under point 12 does no longer include a column for equidae. Several Decisions laying down the animal health conditions and veterinary certification for imports of equidae do however include lists of third countries approved for that purpose. The Commission, with the present draft Decision, proposes to combine the specific lists mentioned above and the details of regionalisation in one consolidated list, including specific columns for semen, ova and embryos of the equine species.

The Committee reached a technical agreement (one Member State opposed). The draft Decision will be submitted to the WTO for comments under the SPS Veterinary agreement.


Postponed, see SCFCAH of 7 February 2003.
15. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 2001/618/EC to include the whole territory of Germany in the list of Member States and regions free of Aujeszky’s disease and certain departments of France in the lists of Member States and regions free of this disease and regions where approved eradication programmes are in place (Doc. SANCO/10568/2002-rev2)**

France has applied for several départements to be recognised free of Aujeszky’s disease. The eradication programmes are regarded to have been successful in eradicating the disease in these French regions. The départements concerned are Hautes-Alpes, Drôme, Hérault, Orne, Pyrénées-Orientales, Paris, Var, Haute-Vienne, Essonne, Hauts-de-Seine, Seine-Saint-Denis, Val-de-Marne, and Val-d’Oise, Réunion. In addition, France has presented documentation as regards the eradication programme in place in the département of Pas-de-Calais, requesting the approval of this programme.

In addition, Germany has applied for the two remaining Länder (Niedersachsen and NordRhein-Westfalen) to be recognised free of Aujeszky’s disease. Disease free status would thus apply for the whole country.

The Member States were presented a draft Decision aiming to amend the lists of Member States and regions free of Aujeszky’s disease and regions where approved Aujeszky’s disease eradication programmes are in place.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour.**


Following an outbreak of FMD in Botswana, the Member States, at the last SCFCAH-meeting, voted on a proposal to suspend importation of de-boned fresh meat of susceptible species from the previously approved zones of Botswana. The authorities from Botswana have now provided additional information on the infected areas, buffer zones and zones to be considered free. These free areas are separated physically from the rest of the territory by fences. The Member States were therefore presented a draft Decision aiming to regionalise Botswana enabling the import suspension from these free zones to be lifted.

**Vote: 77 votes in favour, 10 abstentions (qualified majority).**

The Commission also provided update information about the FMD situation in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

17. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 92/452/EEC establishing lists of embryo collection teams and embryo production teams approved in third countries for export of bovine embryos to the Community as**
Commission Decision 92/452/EEC established a list of embryo collection and production teams approved for export to the Community of embryos of the bovine species. The Member States considered a draft Decision aiming to add one embryo collection team in the United States of America and to replace one team in Canada.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour.

18. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 90/14/EEC to include Slovenia in the list of third countries from which Member States authorise imports of deep-frozen semen of domestic bovine animals and amending Decision 93/693/EEC as regards semen collection centres approved for the export to the Community of semen of domestic animals of the bovine species from Canada, New Zealand, Poland and Slovenia (Doc. SANCO/10031/2003-rev.2)

The purpose of the draft Decision presented was twofold:

- add Slovenia to the list of third countries from which Member States authorise imports of deep-frozen semen of domestic bovine animals
- update the list of approved bovine semen collection centres in Canada, New Zealand, Poland and Slovenia

Vote: unanimous vote in favour.

18A. Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 1999/466/EC establishing the officially brucellosis-free status of bovine herds of certain Member States or regions of Member States (Doc. 10724/SANCO/2002-rev.1)

The proposal aims to declare the Region of Emilia-Romagna, Italy officially free from bovine brucellosis and to amend Decision 1999/466/EC accordingly.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour.

18B. Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 1999/465/EC establishing the officially enzootic- bovine-leukosis-free status of bovine herds of certain Member States or regions of Member States (Doc. 10725/SANCO/2002 rev.1)

The proposal aims to declare the Region of Emilia-Romagna, Italy officially free from enzootic bovine leukosis and to amend Decision 1999/465/EC accordingly.
Vote: unanimous vote in favour.

18C. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision on the approval of the plans for the eradication of classical swine fever in feral pigs and emergency vaccination of feral pigs against classical swine fever in Luxembourg and repealing Decision 2002/181/EC (Document SANCO/10073/2003)**

Postponed, see SCFCAH of 7 February 2003.

19. **Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision on the financial support to Germany for the undertaking of technical and scientific measures for the collection of epidemiological information on classical swine fever in feral pigs (doc. SANCO/10035/2003)**

The Commission distributed and presented the above proposal for study and observation. Member States were informed that the Federal Institute for Epidemiology of Animal Diseases, Wusterhausen, Germany is in the process of establishing a digital database for the collection and exchange of epidemiological information via the Internet on classical swine fever in feral pigs. This database will be shared with other Member States in order to verify its validity as a tool to control the disease.

The Commission presented a draft Decision to financially support this initiative of Germany, as it may result in a development of Community legislation on classical swine fever and in a better control of the disease.

20. **Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision on the financial support to the Member States for the undertaking of technical and scientific measures for the evaluation of a new classical swine fever discriminatory test (doc. SANCO/10036/2003)**

The Commission distributed and presented the above proposal for study and observation. It was explained that a new classical swine fever discriminatory test to distinguish between vaccinated animals and the infected ones has been recently developed by the company Intervet. This test needs further independent evaluation and eventual validation so that the Commission may envisage approving its use in the framework of Council Directive 2001/89/EC on Community measures for the control of classical swine fever. This evaluation is to be carried out by the Community Reference Laboratory for classical swine fever and the national classical swine fever laboratories in the Member States.

The purpose of this Decision is to financially support the work of the Community Reference Laboratory in co-operation with the National Reference Laboratories in the Member States.
21. Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision approving a Diagnostic Manual establishing diagnostic procedures, sampling methods and criteria for the evaluation of the laboratory tests for the confirmation of African swine fever (Doc SANCO/10037/2003)

The Commission distributed and presented the above proposal for study and observation. The proposal aims to approve a Diagnostic Manual establishing diagnostic procedures, sampling methods and criteria for the evaluation of the laboratory tests for the confirmation of African swine fever.

The Commission noted the Member States’ comments.

22. Miscellaneous

1) Germany invited the Commission to envisage appropriate measures in relation to foot-and-mouth disease in Namibia.

2) Spain sought clarification as regards the interpretation of certain provisions of Decision 2002/995/EC (export problems to Russia)

3) The Commission distributed a CD-ROM containing a number of applications from Member States for achieving approved status of farms or zones with regard to viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) and infectious haematopoietic necrosis (IHN) (applications listed in Doc. SANCO/10063/2003). The Member States were invited to send comments by 7 March 2003. The Commission’s representative also reiterated its request for comments on previous applications (deadline 21 February 2003).

4) The Commission also reported on the presence of low pathogenic avian influenza in Hong Kong.

5) Information from the Commission about the foot-and-mouth virus strain circulating in Paraguay which appeared to be similar to the one circulating in other South American countries.

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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