SUMMARY RECORD OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 5 & 6 September 2006
(Section Animal Health and Welfare)
(Section Controls and Import Conditions)

President: Bernard Van Goethem and Alberto Laddomada

All the Member States were present. Luxembourg and Italy, partly absent, were represented respectively by Belgium and Cyprus. Lithuania, partly absent, was not represented.

1. Information from Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and France on the bluetongue situation (Cf. SCFCAH reports of 21 and 28 August 2006)

Belgium
Since the last update on 26 August, the number of outbreaks has increased from 46 to 70 as of 2 September 2006. The number of suspicions has also risen from 8 to 23. The Belgian delegation presented the measures in place in particular the movement restrictions within, to and from the 20km zone and within, to and from the protection zone (PZ). As regards artificial insemination centres, which are situated only in the PZ, samples have been taken from all animals on 20 August. The tests (ELISA and PCR) all gave negative results. The production until 20 July is therefore considered as safe. Sampling and testing occur every month. Screening to establish the BT situation is also in place. Results will be available next week. Concerning the vector, few culicoides were captured with the 5 culicoid traps set on 26 August by the Spanish experts.

The question was asked to Belgium whether they had clues from checks or findings on how and when the disease was introduced in Northern Europe. Belgium is collaborating with other affected Member States but has so far no evidence on any of the hypotheses. Exports have been traced back to 1 July and revealed no positive cases. It thus seems necessary to trace further back.

The Netherlands
The BT situation on 4 September 2006 is of 34 confirmed outbreaks: 24 in sheep holdings and 10 in cattle holdings, all located in the south of Limburg province. Experts have not yet been able to identify exactly when the BT virus arrived in the region. Tracing of exports goes back to 15 June, and the 1st clinical signs of BT were reported early or mid July. Besides, one cannot predict the end of the vector activity season. Until then, all holdings within the 20km zone shall be screened. Serological testing will take place after the vector activity season. Italy is sending 20 culicoid traps and the Netherlands will order another 25 traps. Meanwhile, selection of locations for the traps and instructions for veterinarians are organised.
**Germany**
The German delegation presented an update of the BT situation and measures in Germany. The disease has spread and several confirmed outbreaks are now located a little further from the borders of the Netherlands and Belgium, further inside the country. The restricted areas have therefore been extended.

**France**
France notified the European Commission of its first bluetongue outbreak. This BT case was confirmed on 30 August 2006 in cattle in the Ardennes region, close to the Belgian border, within the 150km restricted zone already set up in response to outbreaks in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. The clinical signs of this case were feeble. The French authorities have established a 20km protection zone around the outbreak, in which a movement ban will apply to all ruminants, other than those who have received veterinary approval for transport for direct slaughter or to another holding within the restricted zone. Between 22 and 25 August, an information campaign took place all over France to bring more awareness to veterinarians and farmers, and surveillance was reinforced. Over 1800 serological tests, covering 60 holdings, revealed 2 positive results. An additional outbreak has just been confirmed 50km from the 1st case, which brings today the number of outbreaks to 4.

The Commission proposed to further discuss bluetongue control solutions at the next CVO meeting on 22 September 2006.

2. **Information and exchange of views on the classical swine fever situation**

**Germany**
The German delegation gave a presentation of the classical swine fever situation in wild boar in North Rhine-Westphalia and Rhineland-Palatinate in 2005-2006. In North Rhine-Westphalia, 28 outbreaks of CSF in wild boars were reported between 7 October 2005 and 3 February 2006: 26 outbreaks in the town of Bad Münstereifel, 1 in Euskirchen and 1 in the municipality of Blankenheim. The number of examined wild boars as of 31 July 2006 amounts to 4221 (61% piglets) from which 1538 (70% piglets) were examined after 3 February 2006. In Rhineland-Palatinate (Eifel area), to date, 3 outbreaks of CSF in wild boar (piglets) have been reported in 2006 in the city of Ahrweiler.

**Slovak Republic**
The Slovak delegation presented an update of the classical swine fever situation in Slovakia in domestic pigs and wild boars. The last outbreak of CSF in domestic pigs dates back to August 2005 in the Lucenec district. No outbreak occurred in 2006. The last occurrence of CSF in wild boars was confirmed on 20 January 2006. Serological and virological investigations for CSFV in wild boars were carried on through 2006 between January and June as part of the eradication plan for CSF in wild boars. Oral vaccination was conducted covering some 8000 km².
3. Information on the avian influenza situation in EU and in third countries

**Denmark**
The Danish delegation gave a presentation on three LPAI outbreaks in game bird holdings, detected via the AI surveillance programme. In each case, no clinical signs were reported in the birds. The restriction zones established around the outbreaks of 1km radius contain no commercial or hobby poultry holdings.

On 2 June 2006, an outbreak of LPAI H5N2 was detected in Tommerup, Funen county. Control measures, as laid down in Council Directive 2005/94/EC, were immediately implemented. The restriction zone was lifted on 29 June. Final cleaning and disinfection were finalised on 22 July.

On 5 July 2006, an outbreak of LPAI H5N3 was detected in Løvel, Viborg county. Tracing of the virus was complicated by the lack of collaboration from the owner of the farm. He had not implemented the prescribed biosecurity measures during the bird migration period. Most likely, infected wild birds had entered the premises and spread the virus. The nearby swamp, heavily stocked with mallards, is being cleaned and disinfected. The area shall be closed until 31 December 2006.

On 18 July 2006, an outbreak of LPAI H5N3 was detected in Illebølle, Funen county. The owner of the affected holding had purchased ducklings for direct release. Transport boxes that had not been disinfected were identified as a possible source of the infection. The N-type is similar to the July outbreak of LPAI H5N3. Final cleaning and disinfection were finalised on 4 August. The restriction zone was lifted on 31 August 2006.

**Germany**
The German delegation presented their final report about the AI case in a swan kept in a zoo in Dresden, which was detected on 1 August and confirmed on 3 August 2006 as HPAI H5N1. The protection and restriction measures, immediately established, were lifted on 3 September 2006. Clinical examinations, virological and laboratory investigations are still ongoing. A direct or indirect introduction of the virus by wild birds is suspected, although no tests on wild or other zoo birds have so far given a positive result. The Commission recommended pursuing the study of this single case.

Germany also presented their field study on vaccination efficacy. *Cf. point 16.*

**Romania**
The Romanian delegation gave a presentation of the AI state of play in Romania. 180 outbreaks of AI in poultry occurred in three consecutive episodes between October 2005 and July 2006. The last outbreak was closed on 30 July 2006 and the whole territory has been considered as AI-free. Considering that Romania has fulfilled, in accordance with Community legislation, all obligations to prevent the spread of and eradicate the AI disease, implementing the required biosecurity measures, with ongoing monitoring and surveillance all over the territory, Romania has therefore requested that the restrictions on exportation of poultry, poultry meat, its products and by-products be lifted.

**Hungary**
The Hungarian delegation gave an updated presentation of the HPAI situation in ducks and geese. The first restrictive measures were implemented on 3 June 2006,
followed by a massive culling and the complete depopulation of the protection zone. The last AI outbreak was reported on 12 July. The measures implemented in the surveillance zones were lifted on 21 August in both counties under restriction: Bács-Kiskun and Csongrád. Surveillance consisted of serological testing, virus isolation and PCR. Repopulation started on 1 September under strict controls. Systems of traditional extensive farming will be reviewed. Future actions will focus also on maintaining the awareness, training and improving the laboratory capacity.

The Commission distributed the following documents for information:
- SANCO/10562/2006: USDA press release on LPAI H5N1 in Maryland in wild birds;

   *(Cf. pt 24 on draft Commission Decision SANCO 10500/2006)*

The Commission distributed an information paper on the restrictions that Member States intend to apply to pigeon races. This paper provides also an overview of the race programme and other events planned between 1 September 2006 and 28 February 2006.

5. **Information on preventive vaccination plans against avian influenza in birds kept in zoos**

The Commission distributed the following document, for restricted use only: *SANCO/10527/2006-B – Information received from Member States on vaccination of birds kept in zoos against avian influenza – Part III.*

Decision 2005/744/EC lays down the requirements for the prevention of HPAI caused by influenza A virus of subtype H5N1 in susceptible birds kept in zoos in the Member States. It was subsequently replaced by Decision 2006/474/EC which provides for the approval of preventive vaccination plans against avian influenza in zoo birds. According to this latter Decision, the Commission has approved 17 preventive vaccination plans against avian influenza in birds kept in zoos submitted by Member States. Vaccination plans have been implemented by 12 Member States.

6. **Information from the Member States on eradication programmes 2005 (FR)**

- **Bovine brucellosis 2005**: Greece, Poland
- **Bovine tuberculosis 2005**: Greece, Poland
- **Sheep and goat brucellosis 2005**: Greece
- **Rabies 2005**: Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Austria, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland
The Member States mentioned here above presented in a succinct manner the results of the implementation in 2005 of the co-financed eradication programmes. The Commission thanked those countries for their presentations which allow all Member States to have an update of the disease situations as regards progress of the co-financed eradication programmes.

7. **Information of the Member States: Communication of the amount of the financial contribution of the Community in the expenditure carried out by certain Member States in 2005 for the eradication of scrapie, the eradication of bovine spongiform encephalopathy and the monitoring of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (LVDB)**

The Commission distributed 2 tables for information on the financial aid of the Community in the expenditure carried out by certain Member States in 2005 for the eradication of scrapie, the eradication of BSE and the monitoring of TSEs.

8. **Summary on information received from the Member States on experience with the implementation of electronic identification in sheep and goats (SANCO/10536/2006) (KUS)**

The Commission distributed a working document on the above mentioned subject. Member States which have not yet provided the necessary information are requested to do so by the next SCFCAH meeting.

9. **Information from the Commission on reports received from the Member States on the results of controls made in 2005 in the bovine sector regarding Community provisions for identification and registration in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1082/2003 (SANCO/10534/2006) (KUS)**

No document was distributed. The Commission reminded the Member States of the past deadline for submission of the reports on the results of controls made in 2005 in the bovine sector. This information, which should be sent by the Member States concerned before the next SCFCAH meeting, is necessary to complete document SANCO/10534/2006.


Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport will enter into force on January 2007. To help the Member States with certain aspects of the implementation, the Commission gives every month in the SCFCAH a short presentation on the main provisions of the Regulations that will affect animal transport in Europe and which will be published on the website of DG SANCO for further reference.

During the presentation, the administrative issues were explained as well as the design of a vehicle to transport live animals like the individual stall for horses, forced ventilation systems, monitoring and recording of temperature and the obligation of a satellite navigation system on board. The space allowance remains unchanged in comparison with former Directive 91/628/EEC.
11. **Presentation of the Joint Research Centre (JRC) on the satellite navigation system**

Taking into consideration the mandate of Regulation No 1/2005 – Art.6.9 on implementing a Navigation System for the monitoring of the animal welfare during long journeys – and the present experience of JRC, DG SANCO and JRC decided to establish a formal administrative agreement (AA) to ensure the technical support of JRC.

The AA, formally approved in December 2005, establishes 2 phases. In phase 1, JRC is in charge of drafting the Technical Specifications of the navigation system, organising an international workshop with the participation of all parties involved (developers, transporters, authorities, other Commission DGs, etc.) and providing an impact assessment study. Phase 2 includes a scenario definition, the development of a navigation system prototype, including an in-field test.

At the moment, phase 1 has been completed and all deliverables have been formally dispatched to DG SANCO. The workshop took place on 11-12 June 2006 in Italy. 120 pre-selected participants attended the workshop, where the first version of the Technical Specifications was presented and discussed thoroughly. Relating documents (specifications, reports) can be found on [http://www.jrc.cec.eu.int/project/tl/](http://www.jrc.cec.eu.int/project/tl/).

The workshop was an important event, as it provided the forum with the contributions from all relevant parties. The final version of the Technical Specifications takes notice of the majority of the comments.

Phase 2 of the AA will be launched soon, once DG SANCO has formally approved the completion of Phase 1 and formally agreed with JRC on the way to develop Phase 2.

12. **Information and exchange of views on the measures taken by the Member States concerning the environmental enrichment of pigs and the prevention of tail docking**

Following a number of FVO reports on the welfare of farm pigs, the Commission was concerned by the level of implementation of the requirements of Directive 91/630/EEC, introduced in 2001, for environmental enrichment and the prevention of tail docking in pig farms. It was therefore requested that the Member States provide the Commission with information on the measures taken by the competent authorities, as to ensure that those requirements were actually enforced.

13. **Russian import conditions for animals and products of animal origin (RH)**

The Commission informed the Member States that export certification to Russia, and in particular the date for introduction of the new amended export certificates, would be discussed and agreed at the CVO meeting of 21 September 2006. The Commission requested that Member States be ready to use the amended certificates as soon as possible.
14. **Import of products of animal origin from Brazil (CLS/HLB)**

a. **Fishery products: Preliminary information of the outcome of the Community inspection carried out in June 2006 and of the provisional sanitary measures put in place**

   The Commission provided preliminary information on the deficiencies identified by the inspection mission in the fishery sector in Brazil. The Commission also informed that in view of those deficiencies, Brazil was requested:
   - To urgently provide an action plan containing the corrective measures to be put in place;
   - To provide the audit report of all the establishments and vessels currently approved to export to the EC;
   - To delete from this list the establishments that do not meet EC requirements;
   - To carry out systematic pre-export checks for histamine in all susceptible species intended to the EC market and to provide the analytical results attached to the health certificate.

   In addition the Commission will immediately launch the procedure to delete from the list the establishments which do not comply with EC requirements.

b. **Beef: Preliminary information of the outcome of the Community inspection carried out in July 2006**

   The Commission recalled the animal health situation following the foot and mouth disease (FMD) outbreak last year. Three states were suspended on epidemiological grounds. There have been three missions to Brazil: in November 2005, in January and July 2006. As regards the present FMD situation, since the last mission, the Brazilian authorities have made great efforts. However, knowledge of the virus circulation is still insufficient and the national ban is still in place.

   The last mission indicates that corrective actions are being undertaken. The mission did not find illegal use of growth promoters or drugs. There is no reason to review the current situation, and the three states remain suspended. The Commission continues to monitor the situation closely.

c. **Residues of veterinary medicines: Information of the results of the Community inspection carried out in November 2005 and of the measures put in place**

   The Commission informed that following the deficiencies identified by the inspection visit carried out in Brazil in November 2005, it withdrew the approval of the RMP for honey and game meat. In consequence, imports of these products were suspended.

   For the other commodities, Brazil has requested the withdrawal of the approval of the RMP for milk, pig meat and ovine-caprine, and has provided satisfactory guarantees for beef, horse meat, and aquaculture. The RMP for eggs and egg products was never approved.

   A follow-up inspection will be carried out in January or February 2007.
d. **Illegal imports of products of animal origin from Brazil into some Member States**

The Commission informed that some Member States were authorising the imports of pig meat, eggs and egg products from Brazil. Imports of these commodities are not authorised: pig meat for animal health reasons, eggs and egg products because a RMP for this commodity was never approved. The Commission advised Member States to stop these imports immediately.

e. **Listing of fishery establishments and vessels**

The Commission informed that, following the results of the inspection visit to Brazil, it intends to delete some establishments and vessels from the list of approved establishments and vessels for Brazil.

14A. **Information: Programme for control and eradication of classical swine fever in the Republic of Bulgaria (SANCO/10551/2006)**


14B. **Information: Plans for the eradication of classical swine fever and the emergency vaccination of pigs in holdings and of feral pigs against classical swine fever in Romania (SANCO/10552/2006)**

The Commission distributed the following documents for information:
- The 2007 Programme for monitoring, control and eradication of classical swine fever in Romania;
- The emergency vaccination programme for the oral immunisation of wild boars against classical swine fever in Romania;
- A cover letter from the government of Romania, by Dr Marian Avram.

15. **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 (SANCO/10554/2006-Rev.2)**

**Bluetongue**

Commission Decision 2005/393/EC on protection and surveillance zones in relation to BT, and conditions applying to movements from or through these zones, provides for the demarcation of the global geographic areas where the restricted zones are to be established by the Member States, in relation to BT. By Decision 2006/591/EC, the Commission has amended Decision 2005/393/EC as regards the demarcation of restricted zones established, following the notification of outbreaks of BT by the competent authorities of the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium.

On 31 August and 5 September 2006 respectively, France and Germany informed the Commission of new confirmed BT cases. In view of those findings, Decision 2005/393/EC should be amended in order to amend the restricted zone including the affected area.

On the request of the Netherlands, small amendments to the demarcation of the Dutch restricted zone are necessary.
Vote: Unanimously in favour.


Germany has recently experienced a high number of positive findings of highly pathogenic avian influenza A virus of subtype H5N1 in wild birds. Outbreaks of the disease have also occurred in a poultry holding and in a zoo. Vaccination against avian influenza of H5 and H7 subtypes is considered a valuable tool for disease prevention and control, with the aim of eradication, but has not yet been applied on poultry holdings in Germany. Germany wishes to gather further data on the use of vaccination by means of a large scale study and has therefore submitted a preventive vaccination plan for approval. Vaccination is to be carried out in three commercial holdings to assess the efficacy of an avian influenza vaccine of H5 subtype under normal field conditions. In accordance with the submitted plan, no live poultry, poultry meat or eggs originating from these holdings will be put on the market.

The Commission assessed the German preventive vaccination plan. It contains all the required information and should therefore be approved. Germany shall submit a report to the Commission on the implementation of the plan within one month from the date of application of this Decision, and shall present quarterly reports at the SCFCAH meetings as of 3 October 2006.

Vote: Unanimously in favour.

17. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission amending Annexes I and II to Decision 2003/634/EC approving programmes for the purpose of obtaining the status of approved zones and of approved farms in non approved zones with regard to viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) and infectious haematopoietic necrosis (IHN) in fish. (Doc. SANCO/10453/2006 – Rev.2) (YT)

Commission Decision 2003/634/EC approves and lists programmes submitted by various Member States. The programmes are designed to enable the Member State subsequently to initiate the procedures for a zone, or a farm situated in a non-approved zone, to obtain the status of approved zone or of approved farm situated in a non-approved zone, as regards one or more of the fish diseases, viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) and infectious haematopoietic necrosis (IHN). Italy has applied, between November 2005 and end May 2006, for the approval of 4 programmes to be implemented within its territory. The applications submitted have been found to comply with Article 10 of Directive 91/67/EEC and the programmes should therefore be approved. The programme applicable to the entire territory of Cyprus and one programme applicable to Italy in the Veneto region have been finalised. They should thus be deleted from Annex II to Decision 2003/634/EC. Decision 2003/634/EC should be updated accordingly.
18. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Annex I to Decision 2003/858/EC as regards the list of territories from which importation of certain species of live fish, their eggs and gametes intended for farming in the European Community (EC) is authorised. (Doc. SANCO/10513/2006-Rev.1) (YT)**

Community veterinary experts undertook in March 2006 an on the spot inspection in Albania to verify the compliance with Commission Decision 2003/858/EC laying down the animal health conditions and certification requirements for imports of live fish, their eggs and gametes intended for farming, and live fish of aquaculture origin and products thereof intended for human consumption.

The findings during that inspection show that Albania cannot provide for the necessary animal health guarantees for export into the Community of live fish, their eggs and gametes intended for farming. Since such import into the Community could jeopardise the aquatic animal health situation in the Community, Albania should be removed from the list of third countries from which imports of live fish, their eggs and gametes intended for farming in the Community are authorised.

The purpose of this Decision is to update Decision 2003/858/EC accordingly. Currently, Albania does not export commodities covered by Decision 2003/858/EC. In consequence, the removal of Albania from the list would not have any economic impact on Member States, or on Albania.

**Vote: Unanimously in favour.**

19. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Regulation implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 21/2004 as regards the minimum level of checks to be carried out in relation to the identification and registration of ovine and caprine animals (SANCO/10475/2004-Rev.10) (KUS)**

Community rules for the identification and registration of ovine and caprine animals are laid down in Council Regulation (EC) No 21/2004, establishing a system for the identification and registration of ovine and caprine animals and amending Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003 and Directives 92/102/EEC and 64/432/EEC. Article 10(1)(a) of the said Regulation requires that the Commission shall adopt measures necessary for the implementation of the Regulation concerning the minimum level of checks to be carried out in the field of identification and registration of sheep and goats. This Regulation lays down detailed rules concerning the number of holdings to be checked, the selection of holdings on the basis of a risk analysis, the warning of checks if necessary, the number of animals to be checked and the reporting system at national and Community level.

A number of Member States rejected the Commission's proposal whereas the competent authority of each Member State shall carry out checks every year, covering at least 3% of holdings comprising at least 5% of the animals in the

**Vote: Unanimously in favour.**
Member State. This 3% rate was considered too high and some Member States expressed their preference to control only 1% of the holdings.

The Commission reiterated that the checks may be carried out in conjunction with any other inspection provided for in Community legislation, e.g. controls carried out within the framework of animal premia. Article 3(g) of this draft Decision clearly provides for the possibility that Member States define additional criteria to select holdings for controls.

**Vote:** Qualified majority of 255 votes in favour, 66 votes against.


The purpose of this Decision is to update the lists of national reference laboratories in Member States. The competent authorities of almost all Member States submitted requests for updating details concerning national reference laboratories listed in a number of Directives and Decision. Those laboratories are competent for performing the analyses in relation to animal infectious diseases which are of the higher risk for the Community animal health status. A complete revision of the lists of national laboratories in Member States is therefore necessary.


The vote was postponed.


Commission 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, provides that Member States are only to import embryos from third countries where they have been collected, processed and stored by embryo collection teams listed in that Decision.

The United States of America have requested amendments to those lists as regards certain embryo collection and production teams in the USA. They have provided guarantees regarding compliance with Council Directive 89/556/EEC on animal health rules governing intra-Community trade in and importation from third countries of domestic animal embryos from bovine species. The embryo collection teams concerned have been officially approved for exports to the Community by the US veterinary services.

The purpose of this Decision is to amend Annex II to Decision 92/452/EEC accordingly.
Vote: Unanimously in favour.

22. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft report from the Commission on the experience acquired by the implementation of Directive 98/58/EC concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes and proposal for a Commission Decision concerning minimum requirements for the collection of information during the inspections of production sites on which certain animals are kept for farming purposes (SANCO/10240/2006-Rev.7) (DS)

The Commission has recently emphasized the need for securing efficient enforcement of existing EU legislation on the protection of farm animals. Art.5(2) of Directive 98/58/EC requires that the Commission submits a report to the Council on the experience acquired by the Member States since the implementation of the Directive. This draft report and the subsequent Commission proposal are both part of the actions planned for 2006.

The draft Commission Decision regarding minimum requirements for the inspection of holdings where animals are kept for farming purposes shall in particular

- introduce definitions for inspections and non-compliances;
- set up a harmonised format for the annual report of the Member States for all animal categories covered by the scope of Directive 98/58/EC;
- establish the minimum data to be collected during an inspection;
- take into account the specificity of each farming activity.

The applicability of the proposed Decision should start on 1 January 2007.

Most Member States replied positively to the Commission's intention. However, some of them asked for specific technical modifications to ensure better consistency. One Member State was concerned about the possible increase of bureaucracy that this draft Decision would generate. The Commission replied that it shares this concern and considers developing an electronic format to facilitate the communication of the data. Yet, the Commission insisted that data are necessary to proceed with the evaluation of its policy at Community level.

Vote: Qualified majority of 278 votes in favour, 29 against, 14 abstentions.


Decision 2005/710/EC provides for the suspension of imports into the Community from certain parts of Romania, affected by that disease, of live poultry, ratites, farmed and wild feathered game and live birds other than poultry, including pet birds, hatching eggs of those species and certain other products of birds.

Romania has now transmitted further information to the Commission on its avian influenza situation. It shows that the outbreaks have now been eradicated and that no further cases have been detected since 7 June 2006. Romania has
therefore requested that the Commission partly lifts the import ban for Romania that was established because of the outbreaks earlier this year. The Commission thus deems it appropriate to lift the ban for certain areas of Romania that are not under direct threat of the disease. Decision 2005/710/EC should therefore be amended accordingly.

Vote: Unanimously in favour.


Decision 2005/432/EC should be amended in order to take into account:

- Since the entry into force of Regulations (EC) Nos 852/2004, 853/2004 and 854/2004, it is necessary to amend and update Community health conditions and certification requirements for the importation into the Community of meat products derived from domestic bovines, porcines, ovines, caprines, equidae, poultry, farmed game, domestic rabbits and wild game.
- Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down rules for the prevention, control and eradication of certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, specifies that risk material may not be imported into the Community.
- The format of all the model certificates need to be amended to take into account their compatibility with TRACES.

However, animal and public health certificates, issued before the application date of this Decision, may be used until 1 June 2007. It is thus appropriate to lay down a transition period for the introduction of new certificates.

Vote: Unanimously in favour.

23B. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Annexes I and II to Decision 2002/308/EC establishing lists of approved zones and approved farms with regard to one or more of the fish diseases viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) and infectious haematopoietic necrosis (IHN) (SANCO/10518/2006-Rev.2) (YT)

Denmark, Germany and Italy have submitted the justifications to obtain, for certain fish farms, the status of approved farms in non-approved zones with regard to VHS and IHN. Those farms meet the requirements of Directive 91/67/EEC on animal health conditions governing the placing on the market of aquaculture animals and products. Those farms should therefore be added to the list of approved farms in a non-approved zone.

Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom have notified the presence of VHS or IHN in zones or farms previously considered free of those diseases. Those zones or farms should therefore no longer appear in Decision 2002/308/EC as zones free of the disease in question.
Germany has notified that one farm located in Schleswig-Holstein has ceased its activity. That farm should therefore no longer appear in Annex II to Decision 2002/308/EC. 

Cyprus and Italy have notified that certain programmes approved by Decision 2003/634/EC have been finalised. All continental parts of Cyprus qualify for the status of approved zones and should be added to the list of approved zones. One farm in Italy qualifies for the status of approved farm in a non-approved zone. It should be added to the list of approved farms in non-approved zones. 

The purpose of this Decision is to update Decision 2002/308/EC accordingly.

Vote: Unanimously in favour.


The Commission presented a draft Decision laying down the animal health conditions and veterinary certification for imports into the Community of racing pigeons intended to participate in racing competitions shortly after import. At present, no specific Community rules have been laid down for imports of racing pigeons. In order to harmonise importation rules into the Community of racing pigeons from third countries, and at the same time protect poultry and other birds in the Community from serious poultry diseases, it is necessary to establish a list of countries from which Member States are authorised to temporarily import such pigeons and to set down the animal health import conditions and veterinary certification.

Some Member States welcomed the proposal. However, after some discussion, the majority deemed that the current legislation for importation of racing pigeons is sufficient and, in any case, the proposal should be studied further.

25. Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision on programmes for the eradication and monitoring of animal diseases, of certain TSEs, and for the prevention of zoonoses, which qualify for a Community financial contribution in 2007 (SANCO/10549/2006-Rev.1) (FR)

The Commission presented a proposal which purpose is to approve the list of programmes from Member States for the eradication and monitoring of animal diseases and of checks aimed at the prevention of zoonoses, and programmes for the eradication and the monitoring of certain TSEs qualifying for a financial contribution from the Community in 2007, and to set out the rate and amount of the financial contribution. The programmes were assessed on the basis of their relevancy, efficiency, effectiveness and utility as well as on the basis of defined priorities. An opinion on this draft shall be requested at the next SCFCAH.

This Decision defines, for clarity and harmonisation, composite products and certain foodstuffs containing products of animal origin which are exempted from veterinary checks, referred to in Directive 97/78/EC, to be carried out upon importation. Some of these products, considered of negligible risk to the Community animal health status, are listed in the Annex.

27. Discussion: WORKING DOCUMENT setting down the list of live animals and products by Combined Nomenclature to assist selection of consignments that must be submitted to veterinary checks at a border inspection post (SANCO/10631/2005-Rev.6) (Legal base: Directive 97/78/EC and Directive 91/496/EC) (Co-decision – Right of scrutiny of the EP) (NGB)

For reasons of clarity, the products of animal origin to be submitted to veterinary checks, and referred to in Article 2(2) (a) of Directive 97/78/EC, should be enumerated in a single list in respect to the relevant combined customs nomenclature, the CN code. This document should help customs and other authorities to identify and select the consignments that require a veterinary check. A list of CN codes, tabulated in parallel with relevant references to veterinary legislation will allow faster (improvement of IT systems) and better coordination between customs and veterinary services. Member States welcomed the proposal in principle and made some technical comments on certain aspects of the Annex. The Commission said that this document had been discussed in a number of specialists working groups, and asked that further comments be sent by e-mail as soon as possible.

28. Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision approving the plans for the eradication of classical swine fever (CSF) and the emergency vaccination against classical swine fever of feral pigs in Bulgaria (SANCO/10397/2006) (JPV)

With a view to the accession of Bulgaria to the EU, the measures following the situation with regard to classical swine fever should be laid down. CSF was present in the feral pig population in Bulgaria. Bulgaria put in place an intensive programme to survey CSF in feral pigs and in pigs in holdings on its territory, which is still ongoing. Bulgaria submitted to the Commission a plan for the eradication of CSF in the feral pigs and a plan for the emergency vaccination of feral pigs on its whole territory. Those plans have been examined by the Commission and found to comply with Directive 2001/89/EC. The purpose of this Decision is to approve the eradication and emergency vaccination plans against CSF in feral pigs submitted by Bulgaria, subject to and on the date of entry into force of the Treaty of Accession of the Republic of Romania and Bulgaria. It shall apply for nine months after its entry into force.

29. Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision approving the plans for the eradication of classical swine fever and the emergency vaccination of pigs in holdings and of feral pigs against classical swine fever in Romania (SANCO/10396/2006) (JPV)

With a view to the Accession of Romania to the EU, the measures following the situation with regard to classical swine fever should be laid down.
CSF was present in 2006 in the feral pig population in Romania. An important number of outbreaks of the disease also occurred in pig holdings. Romania put in place on its territory an intensive programme to survey CSF in feral pigs and in pig holdings, which is still ongoing.

Romania has submitted the following plans to the Commission for approval:

- a plan for the eradication of CSF in feral pigs;
- a plan for the emergency vaccination of feral pigs;
- an emergency vaccination plan for pigs with a marker vaccine in large commercial holdings;
- an emergency vaccination plan for pigs with a live attenuated conventional vaccine in smaller holdings.

The marker vaccine induces an immune response that can be distinguished from the immune response caused by the CSF virus by means of a "discriminatory" test (cf. Decision 2003/859/EC) and is therefore more appropriate in large commercial holdings because of the better surveillance it enables.

All plans mentioned above submitted by Romania have been examined and found to comply with Directive 2001/89/EC.

Provisions are laid down for fresh meat coming from vaccinated pigs.

The purpose of this Decision is to approve the eradication and emergency vaccination plans against CSF in feral pigs and pigs in pig holdings submitted by Romania, subject to and on the date of entry into force of the Treaty of Accession of the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania. This Decision shall apply for nine months after its entry into force and be reviewed meanwhile.

30. Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision concerning control measures relating to classical swine fever in certain Member States (SANCO/10491/2006-Rev.3) (JPV)

Commission Decision 2003/526/EC, concerning protection measures relating to CSF, was adopted on 18 July 2003 in response to CSF outbreaks in certain Member States. Given the epidemiological situation in certain areas of France, Germany and Slovakia, it is appropriate to prolong the protection measures for those Member States in order to prevent the spread of the disease, present in feral pigs, to pig holdings in other areas of the Community. Measures should be laid down for the territory of Bulgaria as of the date of Accession to the EU, with additional provisions as regards pig meat.

Decision 2003/526/EC has been amended several times. Therefore it is appropriate to repeal that Decision and replace it by the present Decision.


With regard to the accession of Romania and its current epidemiological situation, it is appropriate to apply Community measures to the whole territory concerning the dispatch of live pigs, of porcine semen, ova and embryos of swine, and of fresh pig meat, meat preparations and meat products consisting of, or containing pig meat to other Member States. In order to ensure their traceability, such pig meat, pig meat products and other products containing pig meat should be specially marked. These protection measures against CSF are
laid down for a transitional period of nine months as of the date of entry into force of the Treaty of Accession of Romania and Bulgaria.

32. Distribution of a draft Commission Decision approving programmes for the control of salmonella in breeding flocks of *Gallus gallus* presented by certain Member States (SANCO/2541/2006) (IS)

**MISCELLANEOUS**

- **African horse sickness (SANCO/10025/2006-Rev.2) (AEF)**
  
  *Cf. point 15 of 4-5 April 2006 SCFCAH*
  
  The Commission presented a precise situation of the African horse sickness, based on ground investigations in South Africa, and requested the opinion of the Member States to go ahead with the adoption of draft Decision SANCO/10025/2006, repealing Decision 2004/262/EC on certain protection measures with regard to registered horses coming from South Africa. The adoption of this draft Decision had been suspended when, on the day of the approval by the SCFCAH Committee on 4-5 April 2006, a new outbreak of AHS was reported.
  
  The Member States agreed upon the adoption. However, some Member States, which did not have a mandate, shall send their confirmed opinion using the e-mail procedure.

- The Italian delegation requested some explanations regarding the Romanian import ban on poultry meat from Italy, following an outbreak of Newcastle disease in Veneto. Italy stressed that all measures to contain the outbreak had been put in place. Romania replied that a note had been sent to the embassy to clarify the situation, i.e. whether imports of meat, which do not come from Veneto, and produced before the outbreak, could be allowed.

- Germany declared that it encountered problems as regards imports of casings from Brazil and asked for clearer import conditions (Council Regulation (EC) No 999/2001, laying down rules for the prevention, control and eradication of certain TSEs).

- Germany also asked the Commission to give a follow-up to its request for co-financing measures to eradicate classical swine fever in North-Rhine Westphalia.

- Dr Rudy Meiswinkel, IZS – Italy, summarised the meeting of the entomologists experts on bluetongue held in Brussels on 4 September 2006, attended also by the following experts:
  
  Prof. Mehlhorn, *Germany*
  
  Dr M.A. Miranda Chueca, *Spain*
  
  Dr S. Carpenter, *United Kingdom*
  
  Dr T. Baldet, *France*
  
  Dr F. Boinas, *Portugal*
  
  Dr P. Calistri, *representing EFSA*

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1 Adoption on 25 October 2006 of Commission Decision 2006/724/EC
The British delegation presented a report on equine infectious anaemia (EIA), and Ireland announced that it would present a report on the same disease at the next SCFCAH meeting.

The UK raised the issue of health marking of poultry meat derived from poultry in a protection zone established because of an avian influenza outbreak. The UK suggested creating an alternative identification health mark, instead of the "cross" stamp, that would be better accepted by retailers and customers.

The Commission informed the Committee about trouble encountered by Turkey in FMD vaccine production. The assistance requested by the Turkish authorities has been granted.

The Commission informed about a scientific meeting on AI vaccination, held by OIE/FAO/ISZE Venezie, which will take place in Verona on 22-23 March 2007. It will be co-organised and co-financed by the Commission.