SUMMARY RECORD OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 6 DECEMBER 2011
(Section Animal Health and Welfare)

Chair: Alberto Laddomada, Andrea Gavinelli.

All Member States were present. Greece and Lithuania were partly absent but represented.

1. **Information from Romania on the state of play of the implementation of classical swine fever surveillance and on the development of the pig channelling system.**

   The Romanian representative made a presentation on the results of the additional surveillance carried out in the last three months in Romania in the context of the 2011 revised classical swine fever (CSF) eradication programme and the implementation of the CSF "channelled strategy". The favourable results of the surveillance indicate an improvement in the situation.

2. **Bluetongue situation in the Member States.**

   **The Slovak** representative made a presentation on the surveillance implemented from 2009 until November 2011 following the demarcation of a restricted zone in the Slovak territory due to outbreaks in the Czech Republic. An overview was given on the vaccination programme, the serological and virological surveillance of cattle and the entomological monitoring with a view to prove disease freedom and to remove the restricted zone.

   **The Czech** representative made a presentation on surveillance implemented making a reference to the more comprehensive presentation made in September and justifying the recent lifting of the restricted zone in the territory of the Czech Republic on 25 November.

   **The Cypriot** representative made a presentation on the epidemiological situation in 2011. A new serotype (BTV-4) has circulated in Cyprus in the last weeks together with the previously detected BTV-16.

   **The Belgian** representative made a presentation on the surveillance implemented since 2009 until November 2011 and an overview was given on the vaccination programme, the serological and virological surveillance strategy and entomological monitoring. He
also informed the Committee that the lifting of the restricted zone is envisaged for the coming weeks.

The Greek representative informed on their intention to lift the restriction for the Island of Limnos, near the Island of Lesbos. Further data proving disease freedom will be forwarded to the Commission and presented at the next Standing Committee.

3. **Information from Italy on the African swine fever situation in Sardinia.**

The Italian representative made a presentation on the epidemiological situation of African swine fever (ASF) in Sardinia.

After the recrudescence of ASF recorded in the period September – October 2011 surveillance activities have been enhanced on the whole Sardinia, in domestic pigs and wild boars; from 8th November no outbreak has been detected. Controls and investigations are still ongoing in order to determine the source of the infection in commercial farms and the spreading pathway from the high risk area.

The Commission informed about a meeting held with the President of Sardinia Region where he reported on the actions planned to solve the problem.

4. **Information from the Commission on the state of play and next steps of the Animal Disease Information System (ADIS).**

The Commission's representative presented an update on the state of play of the Animal Disease Information System (ADIS) that is being developed in partnership with the World Animal Health Organization for Animal health (OIE). A short overview of the elaboration stage and the scope of the project was provided.

5. **Information from the Commission on the BSE attestation in the ”pet food” certificate and ”game trophy” certificate.**

The Commission presented the draft letter on BSE attestation in health certificates for the import of pet food and material for the production of pet food referred to in Chapters 3(A) to 3(F) of Annex XV to Regulation (EU) No 142/2011 and in the game trophies certificate referred to in Chapter 6(A) of Annex XV to that Regulation.

5A. **Information on the action plans of Member States to implement Council Directive 1999/74/EC on the protection of laying hens.**

Member States confirmed or updated the data concerning the keeping of laying hens in different farming systems at 31/12/2011.

A roundtable discussion was held in relation to the action plans prepared to ensure the implementation of the Directive.

After the sharing of this information a second roundtable was done to allow Member
States to present the action plans and the availability of the lists with the compliant and non-compliant farms.

With the exception of Greece (absent), the other Member States not yet in compliance with the Directive have provided elements on their action plans - some will be transmitted at the latest before the end of next week.

The Commission highlighted again that any unilateral measure that could be taken by any Member State to limit the trade in eggs and egg products (like border control) would be unacceptable. It was also highlighted that, in case of infringement found, the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) should not be used, but bilateral discussions between Member States should be favoured.

It was concluded that based on the discussion, Member States would not take unilateral actions in January.

6. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision on the evolution of animal diseases in the Union and in third countries.

No item raised.


The Commission's representative introduced the draft Implementing Decision. The purpose of this Decision is to approve the previously discussed "channeled strategy" in Romania (see item 1 of the agenda), amending Decision 2008/855/EC accordingly.

Vote: unanimous in favour.


The Commission's representative presented the changes introduced into revision 2 of the document in comparison to the previous version which was presented and discussed at the meeting of this Committee of 8-9 November 2011 (see item 38 of the agenda of that meeting). Due to the need for further consultations with national stakeholders several Member States requested to postpone the vote of this draft.
Vote: postponed.

9. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision approving certain amended programmes for the eradication and monitoring of animal diseases and zoonoses for the year 2011 and amending Decision 2010/712/EU as regards the financial contribution by the Union for programmes approved by that Decision. (Legal base: Article 27(5) and (6) of Council Decision 2009/470/EC) (Opinion of the Committee via the examination procedure) (Doc. SANCO/12832/2011 – Rev.3)

The Commission presented the draft Implementing Decision that, based on the information provided by the Member States, aims to reallocate funds from programmes that are expected to remain unspent to programmes that are expected to exceed their initial allocation.

The decision also increases the level of EU funding for certain eligible measures from 50% to 60% and approves modifications to certain programmes submitted by Member States.

Vote: unanimous in favour.


The aim of this financing decision is to provide Union financial assistance to enable certain designated European Union reference laboratories (EURLs) in the feed and food control area and in the field of animal health and live animals to carry out their functions and duties for the period from 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2012.

For 2012, the proposed financial assistance amounts to € 13,748,000.

Vote: unanimous in favour.


The Commission's representative presented the draft Implementing Regulation.

The aim of the present Implementing Regulation is to amend the Annex to Regulation (EC) No 21/2004 to postpone the date as from when it is obligatory to record the individual identification code of each animal in the movement document when these
animals are moved. It will postpone this obligation until the end of 2014 for the sheep born before 1 January 2010. These new rules will apply from 1 January 2012. This postponement from 31 December 2011 until 31 December 2014 provides for a facilitation of the gradual implementation of electronic identification, without lowering significantly traceability standards.

Some Member States expressed their concerns on the impact of the postponement of the deadline on registration of movements of "historic flocks" and asked the Commission to confirm that no further postponement of the deadlines established in Regulation (EC) No 21/2004 would be introduced in the future. The Commission replied that it does not envisage any further prolongation of those deadlines as this would undermine the enforcement of the rules decided by the legislator.

Vote: qualified majority by 267 votes in favour, 71 votes against, 7 votes abstained, Lithuania represented by Luxembourg, Greece represented by Cyprus.

12. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision concerning the adoption of a financing decision to support voluntary surveillance studies on honeybee colony losses. (Legal base: Article 22 to 24 of Council Decision 2009/470/EC) (Opinion of the Committee via the examination procedure) (Doc. SANCO/7207/2011 – Rev.1)

The Commission reminded the Member States that as requested by the Commission, the EURL for bee health has produced a technical document "Basis for a pilot surveillance project on honey bee colony losses" (available at [http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/bees/bee_health_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/bees/bee_health_en.htm)) providing guidance to Member States to elaborate their surveillance studies on honeybee colony losses.

Member States were invited to send to the Commission their surveillance studies based on the technical document of the EURL for bee health by 30 September 2011.

20 Member States have sent their proposals for the surveillance studies. These proposals are being technically and financially evaluated in order to assess their conformity with the technical document "Basis for a pilot surveillance project on honey bee colony losses". After the evaluation and selection process the rate of co-financing that will not exceed 70% and the amount of the individual contribution to each Member State will be fixed by means of a subsequent Commission Decision.

The surveillance studies need to include controls on apiaries in the period preceding the winter followed by a visit after the winter. Another visit is planned during the summer. Therefore, depending on the design of the Member States' programmes, the first visit is expected to be carried out before winter of 2012 while the second is expected to be carried out the following year. For this reason, it is opportune to consider the period of application of this Decision starting from 1 January 2012 until 30 June 2013.

The draft the Commission proposed to Member States provides for the financing by the Union for the studies by allocating 3.750.000 €.
The Commission previously asked Member States to present their surveillance studies within 30/09/2011 in relation with the period 1/12/2011 to 31/12/2012 while the proposal covers a period from 1/1/2011 to 30/6/2013. Therefore, the Commission announced that Member States will be requested to send an update of their surveillance studies in order to take into account the new period covered.

Vote: in favour, Lithuania represented by Luxemburg, Greece represented by Cyprus.

13. Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision concerning preventive vaccination against low pathogenic avian influenza in mallard ducks in Portugal and certain measures restricting the movements of such poultry and their products. (Legal basis: Article 57(2) of Directive 2005/94/EC on Community measures for the control of avian influenza) (Opinion of the Committee via the examination procedure) (Doc. SANCO/7203/2011)

Following outbreaks of low pathogenic avian influenza in the central-western part of Portugal in 2007/2008 in poultry holdings predominantly keeping mallard ducks for re-stocking supplies of game, emergency vaccination was carried out under Commission Decision 2008/285/EC. Portugal successfully eradicated the disease. However, based on a risk assessment, one holding keeping high value mallard breeding ducks was identified as still being exposed to the potential risk of avian influenza infection. Portugal therefore decided to implement a preventive vaccination plan against avian influenza in that holding as a long term measure which was approved until 31 July 2009 by Commission Decision 2008/838/EC. Based on an updated risk assessment a further preventive vaccination plan was approved by Commission Decision 2010/189/EU until 31 July 2011. On 28 November 2011 Portugal submitted an updated preventive vaccination plan in order to continue vaccination against avian influenza on the one specific holding. The Commission examined this plan and considers it as compliant with Union legislation. It should therefore be approved for implementation until 31 July 2013.


The purpose of this draft Commission Implementing Decision is to amend Parts 1 and 3 of Annex E to Directive 92/65/EEC setting out the model health certificates for trade in respectively, animals from holdings and animals, semen, ova and embryos from approved bodies, institutes or centres.

The model health certificate set out in Part 1 of Annex E to the Directive needs to be amended, in order to:
✔ as regards trade in *suidae*, insert a testing requirement for brucellosis prior to dispatch as required by Directive 92/65/EEC;

✔ as regards trade in birds, clarify that it should only accompany birds that are vaccinated against avian influenza;

✔ as regards trade in dogs, cats and ferrets, take account of the termination of certain transitional rules laid down in Regulation (EC) No 998/2003.

The model health certificate set out in Part 3 of Annex E to the Directive needs to be amended, in order to:

✔ as regards trade in semen, ova and embryos of certain animal species, provide for the clinical examination to be carried out on the day of collection instead of the date of issuing of the certificate as those commodities can be frozen and stored for a long time;

✔ as regards trade in birds, replace the reference to the repealed Decision 2006/474/EC by Decision 2007/598/EC.

**Miscellaneous**

**Issues raised by the Commission:**

- The Commission's representative briefly informed the Committee on the recent exchange of information between the EU Reference laboratory for Bluetongue, the Commission services and the Russian authorities on an unclear situation related to the identification of *possibly bluetongue infected animals in Russia that were imported from Germany*. It appears unlikely the animals became infected when they were in Germany. Further analysis and epidemiological data are needed to fully understand the event.

- On the request of Luxembourg, the first paragraph of point 7 of the summary report of the meeting of this Committee, section Animal Health and Welfare, of 8 & 9 November 2011, is amended to read as follows:

  The Bulgarian, Hungarian, German, Slovene, Romanian and Slovakian representatives made presentations on the results of the implementation of the classical swine fever (CSF) co-financed eradication programmes in 2010. **Luxembourg informed of the main results of their eradication programme.**

- **Born Free Foundation (BFF) report on the implementation of Directive 1999/22/EC.**

  Following the presentation of the BFF report on the implementation of Directive 1999/22/EC and some confusion about its official character, the Commission and in particular a representative of the Directorate General for the Environment (DG ENV) clarified that such report has not been realised, financed or endorsed in any way by the Commission.
Issues raised by the Member States:

- **Information from Switzerland on Newcastle disease in poultry.**

  The Swiss delegation gave an oral update on a Newcastle disease outbreak detected in laying hens in the canton of Neuchâtel on 2 December. This is the first outbreak of this disease in poultry since 13 years in Switzerland. The outbreak concerns 5000 laying hens kept indoors on the floor without access to the open. The birds had shown no clinical signs. On 3 December the birds present on the infected holding were culled and their eggs destroyed. All poultry holdings situated in the protection zone were visited as well as contact flocks. So far no suspicion was raised, but the results of laboratory investigations are still awaited. At present the source of infection is unknown. It was further reported that no exports of table eggs have taken place from this holding to EU Member States. Switzerland has a non-vaccinating policy for Newcastle disease.

- **Germany distributed and briefly presented a document on a newly detected Orthobunyavirus ("Schmallenberg virus") in cattle.**