

**SHORT REPORT
OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 24 OCTOBER 2002
(Section Biological Safety of the Food Chain)
(Section Controls and Import Conditions)
(Section Animal Health and Welfare)**

President: Mr. Willem Daelman for all the points, except for points 7, 11.6 and 11.7: Mr. Henri Belvèze, for points 11.1 and 11.9: Mr. Paul Van Geldorp and point 8: Mr. Alberto Laddomada

All the Member States were present.

1. INFORMATION FROM IRELAND ON THEIR BSE SITUATION

The Irish delegation presented an update report on BSE in Ireland highlighting the following conclusions:

- decrease in number of cases confirmed for 12 weeks ending 20th October;
- reduction in prevalence of BSE test positives;
- shift in the age profile of cases towards older age categories is continuing.

2. PRESENTATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT ON THE MONITORING OF TRANSMISSIBLE SPONGIFORME ENCEPHALOPATHIES IN MEMBER STATES IN 2001 IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHAPTER B II IN ANNEX III OF REGULATION (EC) No 999/2001 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL, AMENDED BY COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No 1248/2001

The Commission presented the annual report on the monitoring of TSE in Member States in 2002 summarising the results of the tests carried out in bovine, ovine, caprine and other species.

3. UPDATES AND EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE IMPLEMENTING AND TRANSITIONAL MEASURES FOR THE FORTHCOMING REGULATION ON ANIMAL BY-PRODUCTS

The Commission clarified a number of permanent and transitional implementing measures in relation to Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 October 2002 laying down health rules concerning animal by-products not intended for human consumption.

4. INFORMATION TO THE MEMBER STATES ON THE COMMUNITY POSITION IN RELATION TO CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE (CWD) IN NORTH AMERICA

Following reports concerning the presence of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in certain regions of the U.S.A., the Commission informed the Member States that it had asked the Scientific Steering Committee to issue an opinion on the subject, in particular as regards defining which tissues of affected animals might be considered

as risk materials. On the basis of this scientific opinion, legislation as regards imports could be laid down.

5. STATE OF PLAY FOR APPROVAL OF NATIONAL RESIDUE MONITORING PLANS IN THE MEMBER STATES

The Commission gave an overview of the current state of play as regards approval of Member States 2002 residue plans:

- (1) Plans from Belgium, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Portugal, Austria and United Kingdom were approved on 25 September 2002.
- (2) Plans from the Netherlands, France Greece, Ireland and Spain are ready for the next step of the approval procedure (letters to the Ambassadors);
- (3) Plans from Italy and Luxembourg, still pending some minor modifications.
- (4) Germany should present their final results in order to be evaluated.

6. THE COMMISSION DISTRIBUTED THE FOLLOWING REPORTS FOR INFORMATION (BY E-MAIL):

- Draft report of a mission to Malta from 17 to 19 June 2002 concerning import controls (DG(SANCO)/8667/2002 – MR Draft)
- Draft report of a mission to Latvia from 13 to 17 May 2002 concerning import controls (DG(SANCO)/8561/2002 – MR Draft)
- Final report of a mission carried out in the Czech Republic from 15 to 26 April 2002 in order to review the plan submitted by the Czech authorities for the upgrading of certain classes of food processing establishments and to review associated live animal controls (DG(SANCO)/8532/2002 – MR Final)
- Final report of a mission carried out in Bulgaria 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)/8520/2002 – MR Final)
- Final report of a mission carried out in the Slovakia from 27 May to 7 June 2002 in order to review the plan submitted by the Slovakian authorities for the upgrading of certain classes of meat processing establishments and to review associated live animal controls (DG(SANCO)/8642/2002 – MR Final)
- Final report of a mission carried out in Latvia from 21 to 31 May 2002 in order to review the plan submitted by the Latvian authorities for the upgrading of certain classes of meat, milk, poultry, fish processing establishments (DG(SANCO)/8641/2002 – MR Final)

- Final report of a mission carried out in Poland from 15 to 26 April 2002 in order to review the plan submitted by the Polish authorities for the upgrading of certain classes of food processing establishments and to review associated live animal controls (DG(SANCO)/8541/2002 – MR Final)

7. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND POSSIBLE OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON A DRAFT COMMISSION DECISION AMENDING DECISION 2002/69/EC CONCERNING CERTAIN PROTECTIVE MEASURES WITH REGARD TO THE PRODUCTS OF ANIMAL ORIGIN IMPORTED FROM CHINA (DOC SANCO/10508/2002)

The Member States were presented a draft Decision proposing to authorise imports of crayfish and surimi from China subject to intensified monitoring and testing of imports of these products applying to 20% of consignments arriving at Community border inspection posts. Imports of these products had been suspended following the detection of chloramphenicol.

The vote was postponed.

8. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND POSSIBLE OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON A DRAFT COMMISSION DECISION ON A COMMUNITY FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO EMERGENCY MEASURES TO CONTROL FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE IN ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN AND GEORGIA, AND AMENDING DECISION 2001/300/EC (DOC. SANCO/10448/2002 - REV 3)

The Member States were requested to consider a draft Decision aiming contribute to emergency measures preventing the spread of foot-and-mouth disease in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia and establishing a vaccination belt along the southern borders of those countries in order to enhance the protection of Turkey from the incursion of foot-and-mouth disease.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour.

9. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON A DRAFT COMMISSION REGULATION LAYING DOWN GUIDELINES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BREEDING PROGRAMMES FOR RESISTANCE TO TRANSMISSIBLE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHIES IN SHEEP (SANCO/1803/2002 - REV.5)

The Commission distributed and presented the above proposal for study and observation. The draft Decision stipulates that:

- Member States shall complete a survey of the prion protein genotype of each of its pure-bred sheep breeds which are native, or which contribute significantly to the gene pool of the sheep population on its territory;

- on the basis of the outcome of that survey, Member States shall introduce a breeding programme to select for resistance to TSEs in each of its sheep breeds which are native, or which form a significant population in its territory;
- by 1 October 2003, Member States shall establish a framework to recognise the TSE-resistant status of certain sheep flocks.

The proposal also specifies the recommended guidelines for implementation, which are based on the opinion of the Scientific Steering Committee of 4-5 April 2002 on safe sourcing of small ruminant materials.

The Commission took note of the Member States' comments.

10. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON A DRAFT COMMISSION REGULATION AMENDING ANNEXES VII, VIII AND IX TO REGULATION (EC) NO 999/2001 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL (SANCO/1802/2002 - REV. 5)

The Commission distributed and presented the above proposal for study and observation. The Commission explained that in its 4-5 April 2002 opinion on safe sourcing of small ruminant materials the Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) recommended that where a case of scrapie is diagnosed in a small ruminant holding, the entire flock should be culled. The SSC has however also indicated that culling sheep of the ARR/ARR prion protein genotype would carry little risk reducing benefit. To avoid discouraging reporting of disease and to safeguard breeds which may carry a low level of resistance, the Commission proposed that this culling should be achieved gradually. To be consistent with such rules for culling, the Commission accordingly proposed to amend the rules for intra-community trade in breeding sheep to remove scrapie-related restrictions from trade in sheep of the ARR/ARR genotype.

11. MISCELLANEOUS

- (1) The Commission (FVO) presented the report of a mission to Angola to assess equivalency with EU legislation in relation to the production of fishery products. A number of deficiencies have been detected during this mission. The Commission representative informed the Member States that following the deficiencies detected during the mission Angola authorities has notified the suspension of exports of fishery products as of 01 November 2002.
- (2) Belgium informed the Committee about a small PCB contamination in complementary feed.
- (3) Germany requested information about the state of play concerning financial assistance for German border inspection posts.

- (4) The German delegation also wanted to be informed about the possibility to dispatch of pieces of meat on spinal column smaller than $\frac{1}{4}$ of a carcass. The Commission said to have received only 3 replies from Member States on a questionnaire issued for that purpose.
- (5) Germany wanted to be informed about the timetable for scientific opinions on cheek meat and on autonomic nervous system.
- (6) Following a question from Italy, the Commission informed the Committee that on the question about the origin of boldenone, the scientific knowledge available on this topic has been found to be very limited and insufficient to reach a conclusive position. The Commission will keep the Committee informed on this issue.
- (7) The Italian delegation needed clarification concerning the possible poisonous nature of certain tropical fish species.
- (8) The Commission noted several questions from the Dutch delegation in relation to milk and milk products, collagen and gelatine.
- (9) Several Member States tabled the problem of nitrofurans in poultry from Brazil and the enormous work burden the systematic controls of these consignments represent. In addition, there seemed to be a different approach in Member States concerning the number of samples to be taken. In order to come to a harmonised approach, the Member States were requested to send their sampling plans and results for nitrofurans in poultry meat to the Commission by 31.10.2002.

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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