14 February 1992 **Vol. 5 - No. 6**

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BELGIUM IS FREE FROM HOG CHOLERA

Translation of the text of a communication received on 10 February 1992 from Dr J. Tambeur, Inspector General, Veterinary Inspection Service, Ministry of Agriculture, Brussels:

In accordance with a decision of the Commission of the European Communities (notified on 14 January 1992), Belgium is officially recognised as being free from hog cholera. The last outbreak of hog cholera was reported on 30 October 1990.

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MONGOLIA IS FREE FROM RINDERPEST

Text of a communication received on 11 February 1992 from Dr L. Dorjsambuu, Chief, State Veterinary Service, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, Ulan Bator:

Following the occurrence of a disease resembling rinderpest on Mongolian territory during the summer of 1991, the assistance of the OIE was sought. The OIE responded favourably to this request by sending an expert, who visited Mongolia between 5 and 22 September 1991.

The conclusions arising from the report of this expert, which was based upon all the information made available to him, are as follows:

1. Epidemiological data

Rinderpest had not been reported in the USSR since 1928 (apart from Georgia in 1989), in Mongolia since 1935 and in the People's Republic of China since 1955.

The events which occurred in summer 1991 took place in a herd of cattle of Russian origin, transhumant in a small portion of Mongolian territory (Bayan-Uul district) bounded by the River Onon, one of its tributaries and the USSR border.

This was traditional transhumance in accordance with an international agreement, and there had been no Mongolian herds in the zone for 15 years.

The animals in question had been vaccinated against rinderpest by Russian veterinarians between 23 April and 15 May 1991, without any noticeable reaction during the days which followed. After his return to France, the expert verified that the type of vaccine used was capable of providing the animals with correct immunological cover.

The first deaths commenced on 5 July 1991, without any incident occurring in the Mongolian herds kept very near to the outbreak (and not vaccinated against rinderpest, as since Mongolian cattle has not been vaccinated against rinderpest in recent years).

In a three-week period, only 20% of the animals present in the outbreak showed clinical signs, and 64% of the sick animals died, providing evidence of a disease of low morbidity but high mortality, little resembling rinderpest.

The remaining sick animals were slaughtered by Russian veterinarians. It is interesting to note that some of the sick animals presented bald, encrusted and exudative skin lesions, rather more reminiscent of the subacute form of mucosal disease than rinderpest.

2. Laboratory findings

Without any attempt being made to isolate the virus in cell culture, rinderpest was diagnosed, using only a slow complement fixation test, a method which is no longer recommended, and without testing the samples for the presence of anticomplementary activity.

However, on the strength of the results obtained using this method, the decision was made to report the disease to the OIE.

Upon his return to France, the expert submitted some of the samples with which he had been provided for histological examination. This revealed necrotic lesions in the lymphoid tissues of affected animals, strengthening the hypothesis of mucosal disease.

The epidemiological data and the results of clinical and histological examinations reported above rule out the initial diagnosis of rinderpest, and indicate that the disease was probably mucosal disease.

It follows, therefore, that Mongolia remained free from rinderpest throughout 1991, in accordance with Article 2.1.4.2 of the OIE International Animal Health Code.

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RABIES IN ITALY

Translation of the text of a telex received on 11 February 1992 from Dr R. Marabelli, Director General of Veterinary Services, Ministry of Health, Rome:

S. R. - 1

Nature of diagnosis: laboratory (Experimental Animal Health Control Institute in Padua).
Number of separate outbreaks identified so far: three (3).
Geographical identification of the outbreaks: Friuli-Venetia Giulia region:
1. Doberdo del Lago district, Gorizia province
2. Resia district, Udine province
3. Moggio Udinese district, Udine province.

Details concerning the outbreaks:

No.	Species	No. of animals in the outbreaks	No. of cases	No. of deaths	No. of animals destroyed	No. of animals slaughtered
1	fau	...	1	0	1	0
2	fau	...	1	0	1	0
3	fau	...	1	0	1	0

Comments concerning affected population: foxes.

Comments to date concerning epidemiology of the disease: all those animals were shot dead near the border.

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RIFT VALLEY FEVER IN MADAGASCAR

Translation of the text of a fax received on 12 February 1992 from Dr V. Rejo Tsiresy, Director of Livestock, Ministry of Animal Husbandry, Water and Forestry, Antananarivo :

S. R. - 1

Nature of diagnosis: serological.
Date of initial detection of animal health incident: February 1991.
Estimated date of first infection: unknown.
Number of separate outbreaks identified so far: four (4).
Geographical identification of the outbreaks:
1. 19° S - 47° E (Cd)
2. 19° S - 47° E (Dc)
3. 20° S - 47° E (Cc)
4. 18° S - 49° E (Ad)

Details concerning the outbreaks:

No.	Species	No. of animals in the outbreaks	No. of cases	No. of deaths	No. of animals destroyed	No. of animals slaughtered
1	bov	40	13	0	0	0
2	bov	70	8	0	0	0
3	bov	...	...	...	0	0
4	bov	150	25	0	0	0

Comments concerning affected population: cows of an improved dairy breed.

Comments to date concerning epidemiology of the disease: a series of abortions was observed in the four establishments: there were no cases of abortion in ewes on farm No. 1; the disease circulated for a short period (approximately two months).

Comments concerning diagnosis: the strains present are similar or identical to that of Rift Valley fever (Zinga).

Control measures taken to date: health measures have been applied in the establishments thought to be contaminated; health surveillance in the areas supplying abattoirs for export.

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