

Contents	
Viral haemorrhagic disease of rabbits in Cuba	151
Latvia is free from hog cholera	152
Newcastle disease in South Africa	152

VIRAL HAEMORRHAGIC DISEASE OF RABBITS IN CUBA

Translation of the text of a fax received on 2 October 1993 from Dr E.F. Serrano Ramírez, Director General of the Institute of Veterinary Medicine, Havana:

S. R. - 2 No. 5

Final date of previous report period: 30 July 1993 (see *Disease Information*, **6** [30], 123).

Final date of this report period: 1 October 1993.

Estimated date of first infection: second week of January 1993.

Number of separate outbreaks identified so far: one hundred and thirty-two (132).

Geographical identification of the new outbreaks:

131. Caimito district, Havana province

132. Güines district, Havana province.

Details concerning the new outbreaks:

No.	Species	No. of animals in the outbreak	No. of cases	No. of deaths	No. of animals destroyed	No. of animals slaughtered
131	lep	591	80	80	198	313
132	lep	208	183	183	13	12

Summary of outbreaks which occurred between 5 May and 30 September 1993:

Province	No. of outbreaks	No. of animals in the outbreaks	No. of cases	No. of deaths	No. of animals destroyed	No. of animals slaughtered
Havana City	52	19,699	4,392	4,392	3,377	11,930
Havana	25	34,084	2,876	2,876	13,688	17,520
Matanzas	55	2,006	526	526	530	950
Total	132	55,789	7,794	7,794	17,595	30,400

Additional information:

Total number of State and private farms inspected	26,179
Total number of animals inspected	502,258
Total number of animals slaughtered or destroyed in and around the outbreaks	122,135

A 30-day period having elapsed since the eradication of the last outbreak (reported in Havana province on 1 September 1993), sentinel animals are to be introduced into the farms before restocking takes place.

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LATVIA IS FREE FROM HOG CHOLERA

Text of a fax received on 4 October 1993 from Professor J. Rimeicans, Director of the State Veterinary Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Riga:

The hog cholera outbreaks reported in Ogre and Limbazi regions in July and August 1993 (see *Disease Information*, **6** [33], 136) have now been eradicated. Quarantine measures imposed on the affected farms were lifted on 22 September 1993. Latvia is therefore free from hog cholera, with effect from this date.

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NEWCASTLE DISEASE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Text of a fax received on 8 October 1993 from Dr P.P. Bosman, Director of Animal Health, Department of Agriculture, Pretoria:

S. R. - 2 No. 2

Final date of previous report period: 27 September 1993 (see *Disease Information*, **6** [37], 147).

Final date of this report period: 8 October 1993.

Estimated date of first infection: 15 June 1993.

Number of separate outbreaks identified so far: nine (9).

Geographical identification of the new outbreaks: the farms are all situated within a range of about 20 to 80 km to the north and north-east of Oudtshoorn, Cape Province:

3. Bergsig Farm, Oudtshoorn district (33° 35' S - 22° 22' E)
4. van Wykskraal Farm, Oudtshoorn district (33° 34' S - 22° 20' E)
5. Vredelust Farm, Oudtshoorn district (33° 30' S - 22° 33' E)
6. Alfalfahof Farm, Oudtshoorn district (33° 28' S - 22° 45' E)
7. Devillierspoort Farm, Oudtshoorn district (33° 25' S - 22° 28' E)
8. Kleinkruis Farm, Oudtshoorn district (33° 26' S - 22° 28' E)
9. Kombuis Farm, Oudtshoorn district (33° 22' S - 22° 15' E)

Details concerning the new outbreaks:

No.	Species	No. of animals in the outbreak	No. of cases	No. of deaths	No. of animals destroyed	No. of animals slaughtered
3-7	avi	1,280	...	67	0	0

Comments concerning affected population: ostriches.

Diagnosis:

- A. *Conclusions to date concerning nature of agent:* to date, only one farm, namely Bergsig Farm, has yielded an isolate of velogenic Newcastle disease virus.
- B. *Comments concerning diagnosis:* virus isolation was carried out at the South Africa Poultry Reference Laboratory, University of Pretoria, Onderstepoort.

Comments to date concerning epidemiology of the disease: an investigation into the possible occurrence of Newcastle disease amongst ostriches in the Oudtshoorn district, revealed the following: seven farms were identified where ostriches had shown clinical signs involving the central nervous system and had died or recovered. Mortality varied from 1 to 28%, with an average of 5%. The origin of these birds varied. One breeder bred his own birds. In the remaining farms, some of the bought-in birds had been on the farm of destination for up to eight months prior to the outbreak of Newcastle disease, whilst others had been on the farm for only three to four weeks before mortalities started. The last mortalities on some farms occurred almost two months ago, while in others there are still some sick birds.

Most of the birds presented clinical signs involving only the central nervous system, namely: paresis/paralysis of the neck with muscle twitching, vertigo and total paralysis before death. A few had, in addition, oedema of the head, mucoid nasal and oral discharge and haemorrhagic diarrhoea.

Pathology was mostly negative or non-specific. Some birds showed enteritis, hepatomegaly, mucoid tracheitis and subepicardial petechiae.

Control measures taken during report period: four of the farms were quarantined, prohibiting the movement of birds without a veterinary permit. Unfortunately, due to the system of producing day-old chicks for rearing by third parties, a total ban is not feasible at this stage. The likelihood of day-old chicks disseminating the disease seems very slim at this point in time. Nonetheless, proper and vigorous zoo-sanitary measures have been advised for eggs, premises and personnel in the incubator houses.

A disease control and vaccination protocol for the production area in Oudtshoorn is being formulated. No meat will be certified for export from 18 October 1993, when the new season starts. The previous season ended on 2 September 1993, at which time there were no Newcastle disease outbreaks within the production area.

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