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#### **RINDERPEST IN NIGER**

##### **Niger confirms its status of country "provisionally free" from the disease**

*Text of a fax received on 22 October 1999 from Mr Aminou Tassiou, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Production, Niamey:*

**Report date:** 22 October 1999.

In recent decades, the rinderpest control strategy in Niger has been based mainly on immunisation of cattle during the annual mass vaccination campaigns throughout the country. Since 1990, control has been conducted within the framework of the Pan African Rinderpest Campaign (PARC) financed by the European Development Fund (EDF). The PARC has, in addition, enabled serological surveys to be carried out and, more generally, the intervention capacities of the Veterinary Services to be strengthened.

No cases of rinderpest have been recorded in Niger since 1986, and today the risk of the disease occurring is low, in particular due to:

- the epidemiological status of the country,
- the epidemiological status of the countries of western and central Africa,
- the existence of a specific sanitary cordon in central Africa,
- the availability of an emergency vaccination scheme and an emergency fund against the disease on a continental scale.

In November 1997, Niger declared itself provisionally free from rinderpest, with a cessation of vaccination throughout the country with the exception of the department of Diffa (see *Disease Information*, **10** [44], 156, dated 7 November 1997). Given the epidemiological situation referred to above and in accordance with the relevant provisions of the *International Animal Health Code*, Niger has decided to extend the cessation of rinderpest vaccination to the entire country with effect from 1 November 1999 and hereby confirms its declaration as a country provisionally free from rinderpest.

The measures accompanying this decision are as follows:

- Vaccination of sheep and goats against peste des petits ruminants with the exclusive use of a homologous vaccine.
- Organisation of the Veterinary Services by means of networks to provide epidemiological surveillance for rinderpest and other major epizootic diseases (foot and mouth disease, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, peste des petits ruminants, etc.). The main types of epidemiological surveillance will be carried out (active surveillance, passive surveillance, targeted surveillance).
- Setting up of an emergency intervention plan.

**WEST NILE FEVER IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
in horses**

EMERGENCY REPORT

*Text of a fax received on 22 October 1999 from Dr Alfonso Torres, Deputy Administrator, Veterinary Services, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC:*

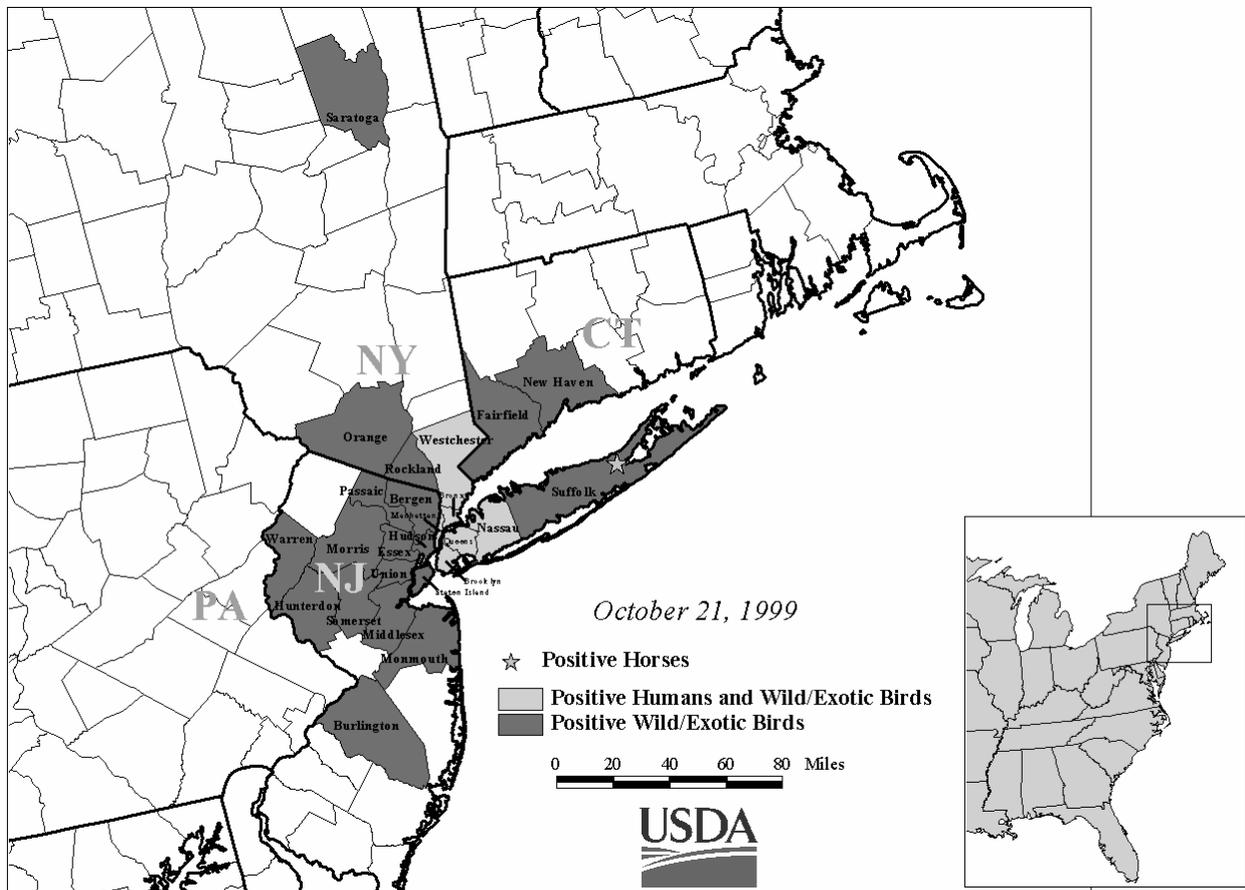
**Report date:** 21 October 1999.

**Nature of diagnosis:** clinical, post-mortem and laboratory.

**Date of initial detection of animal health incident:** 18 October 1999.

**Estimated date of first infection:** 26 August 1999.

West Nile virus (WNV) was isolated from horses in an area that includes the towns of Riverhead, Jamesport and Mattituck in Suffolk County on Long Island, in the State of New York. This is a significant epidemiologic event because WNV has never been detected before in animals in the Americas.



**Description of affected population:** in the outbreak area, there are 156 horses on 16 premises. Other livestock include cattle, goats, and swine. There is no commercial poultry.

**Total number of animals in the outbreak:**

species	susceptible	cases	deaths	destroyed	slaughtered
equ	156	20	2	7	0
fau*	...	...	**	0	0

\* wild birds; \*\* some deaths, primarily in crows (*Corvus* sp.).

**Diagnosis:**

- A. Laboratory where diagnosis was made:** National Veterinary Services Laboratories, Ames, Iowa.
- B. Diagnostic tests used:** virus isolation; PCR<sup>(1)</sup>.
- C. Causal agent:** West Nile virus (WNV).

**Epidemiology:**

- A. Source of agent / origin of infection:** unknown.
- B. Mode of spread:** mosquitoes (probably *Culex* sp.). There is no evidence of infected horses serving as a source of infection for other animals nor as a source of virus for mosquitoes. No commercial poultry are known to be infected with West Nile virus.
- C. Other epidemiological details:** an outbreak of human encephalitis caused by WNV began in New York City in early August 1999; to date there have been 56 human cases identified, including 7 deaths. No human infections with WNV have been confirmed in Suffolk County, New York. More information on human WNV infections can be found in the CDC<sup>(2)</sup>'s *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, available on the Web at <http://www2.cdc.gov/mmwr/>

**Control measures during reporting period:**

- Mosquito control measures have been carried out in the outbreak area. In addition, a natural reduction of mosquito activity has now occurred due to seasonally-lower ambient temperatures.
- Surveillance is conducted to confirm the distribution of WNV in the United States. The surveillance programme includes passive equine surveillance (screening of sera collected for other purposes), and active equine surveillance for cases using guidelines established to investigate suspect WNV horses (particularly investigation of rabies-negative horses that have neurologic illness) and testing of wild birds, mosquitoes, and sentinel chickens.
- No quarantine or other movement restrictions have been placed on horses or other animals in the affected area.

(1) PCR: polymerase chain reaction.

(2) CDC: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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## NEWCASTLE DISEASE IN JAPAN

(Date of last previously reported outbreak: July 1998).

### EMERGENCY REPORT

Text of a fax received on 25 October 1999 from Dr Kenichi Matsubara, Director of Animal Health Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Tokyo:

**Report date:** 25 October 1999.

**Nature of diagnosis:** clinical and laboratory.

**Date of initial detection of animal health incident:** 15 October 1999.

### Outbreaks:

Location	No. of outbreaks
Kashima City, Saga Prefecture, Kyushu Island	1

**Description of affected population:** chickens in a hobby flock.

### Total number of animals in the outbreak:

species	susceptible	cases	deaths	destroyed*	slaughtered
avi	31	1	0	31	0

\* on 22 October 1999.

### Diagnosis:

**A. Laboratory where diagnosis was made:** West Livestock Hygiene Service Centre, Saga.

**B. Diagnostic tests used:** pathological test and haemagglutination inhibition test.

### Epidemiology:

**A. Source of agent / origin of infection:** under investigation.

**B. Other epidemiological details:** there are no commercial flocks within a radius of 2 km of the infected flock. Chickens in all three commercial flocks in Kashima City had been vaccinated against Newcastle disease and showed no clinical signs of Newcastle disease.

**Control measures during reporting period:** stamping out, followed by disinfection of the infected premises.

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## INFECTIOUS SALMON ANAEMIA IN CANADA

### EMERGENCY REPORT

*Text of a fax received on 27 October 1999 from Dr Norman G. Willis, Executive Director, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Winnipeg:*

**Report date:** 27 October 1999.

**Nature of diagnosis:** laboratory.

**Date of initial detection of animal health incident:** August/September 1999.

**Estimated date of first infection:** unknown.

**Location of the outbreak:** Magaguadavic river, Province of New Brunswick.

**Description of affected population:** infectious salmon anaemia virus (ISAV) was detected in 4 Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) aquaculture escapees and 10 adult wild Atlantic salmon returning to the Magaguadavic river.

**Diagnosis:** laboratory confirmation by isolation and culture of the virus.

The escapees were killed as they were removed from the Magaguadavic river and sent to the laboratory where they tested positive for infectious salmon anaemia (ISA).

Two wild fish that were collected from the Magaguadavic river in early August were held for up to six weeks at the Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF) facility in Charmcook, New Brunswick, in tanks supplied with brackish well water, before they were diagnosed with ISA. One had been severely affected by sea lice, a salmon parasite, and had scarred skin lesions while severe scale losses were noticed on the second fish.

The Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), in collaboration with the New Brunswick Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, conducted non-lethal sampling of the remaining 12 wild Magaguadavic river Atlantic salmon held at the ASF facility, to test for the presence of ISA. ISAV was detected in 8 of these 12 fish.

**Epidemiology:** this is the first time ISA has been found outside an aquaculture cage.

Whether one or both of these two wild fish transmitted ISAV to the remaining fish at the ASF facility is a subject of speculation. The two wild fish could have been infected by the ISA virus while in the wild before returning to the Magaguadavic river but we cannot rule out the possibility that the fish became infected while being kept at the holding facility, although the ASF believes this is not the case.

The discovery of some ISA-positive salmon aquaculture escapees was not entirely unexpected and we should be prepared to find the virus in some marine species other than salmon some time in the future.

### **Control measures during reporting period:**

DFO and the Province of New Brunswick have jointly recommended to the ASF that the fish remain in quarantine. Should the ASF wish to spawn these fish in order to save the wild stock genes, the recommendation from DFO and the Province is that the progeny be tested during their early life cycle in late 1999 and early 2000. Experiments to determine if the virus is passed from parent to egg have indicated that there is no such transmission. The disease seems to be passed from fish to fish and so spawning the broodstock is considered to be a safe step (and one that will maintain the genetic line of this river) if all quarantine precautions are taken.

DFO is continuing to collect and analyse wild marine fish (over 200 samples are now being tested) as well as additional wild and cultured salmon when they become available. DFO will be testing an additional 100 broodstock salmon from the Saint John and Saint Croix rivers in the next few weeks.

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