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NEWCASTLE DISEASE IN LUXEMBOURG in pigeons

(Date of last previously reported outbreak: October 1995).

EMERGENCY REPORT

Translation of a fax received on 10 December 1999 from Dr Arthur Besch, Director of the Administration of Veterinary Services, Ministry of Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development, Luxembourg:

Report date: 10 December 1999.

Nature of diagnosis: clinical and laboratory.

Date of initial detection of animal health incident: 23 November 1999.

Estimated date of first infection: 18 November 1999.

Outbreaks:

Location	No. of outbreaks
north of the country	1

Total number of animals in the outbreak:

<i>susceptible</i>	<i>cases</i>	<i>deaths</i>	<i>destroyed</i>	<i>slaughtered</i>
100*	25**	25**	75	0

* 85 hobby pigeons and 15 layer hens; ** pigeons.

Diagnosis:

- A. Laboratory where diagnosis was made:** Veterinary and Agrochemical Research Centre (CERVA, Brussels, Belgium).
- B. Diagnostic tests used:** virus isolation on cell culture (brain: negative; organs: positive).
- C. Causal agent:** velogenic strain of paramyxovirus.

Source of agent / origin of infection: probably due to direct contact with wild pigeons.

Control measures during reporting period:

- stamping out;
- quarantine and movement control inside the country;
- control of wildlife reservoirs.

ANTHRAX IN TAIPEI CHINA Follow-up report

FOLLOW-UP REPORT No. 1

Text of a fax received on 13 December 1999 from Dr Watson H.T. Sung, Deputy Director General, Bureau of Animal and Plant Inspection and Quarantine, Council of Agriculture, Taipei:

End of previous report period: 1 December 1999 (see *Disease Information*, **12** [46], 168, dated 3 December 1999).

End of this report period: 10 December 1999.

Since the final diagnosis was confirmed on 28 November 1999, samples of blood from the other 33 horses and 3 dogs, and of the feed, soil, mattresses and dung in the polo club were collected for anthrax detection. The samples collected from the wastewater pool in the National Institute for Animal Health were also tested. All the samples were anthrax negative.

No further anthrax cases have occurred so far.

Diagnostic tests used: bacteria isolation, blood smear test.

Control measures during reporting period: the affected polo club has been quarantined since 23 November 1999. A surveillance programme for testing blood samples collected from horses, cattle and goats from each prefecture and city in the country has been carried out and will continue.

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BLUETONGUE IN GREECE Follow-up report

FOLLOW-UP REPORT No. 3

Text of an e-mail received on 15 December 1999 from Dr Vasilios Stylos, Head, Animal Health Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture, Athens:

End of previous report period: 3 September 1999 (see *Disease Information*, **12** [35], 126, dated 10 September 1999).

End of this report period: 15 December 1999.

1. Introduction

In August, 1999, bluetongue (BT) occurred for the first time ever in mainland Greece and since that time clinical and serological evidence has been found in the Prefectures of Evros, Rodopi, Kavala, Thessaloniki, Chalkidiki, Pieria, Larissa, Magnisia and Evia, while only serological evidence has been found in the Prefectures of Drama and Serres.

In September 1999 the disease occurred, independently and after 20 years of freedom, in the island of Lesvos causing extensive clinical and serological manifestations.

2. Surveillance in affected Prefectures and results thereof

2.1 Clinical surveillance

[Table 1: Recapitulative list of clinical outbreaks of bluetongue in Greece in 1999 \(with the exception of Lesbos, situation as at 5 December 1999\)](#)

2.2 Serological surveillance

[Table 2: Recapitulative results of serological surveillance carried out from August to November 1999 in bluetongue-affected Prefectures](#)

2.3 Entomological surveillance

One of the outstanding questions of epidemiological significance pertaining to the incursion and evolution of BT in mainland Greece has been the species of the vector involved. In order to investigate this matter, light traps were set up in suitable locations and the first insect collections have been sorted out and classified.

[Table 3: Results of culicoides collections in mainland Greece in 1999](#)

3. Surveillance in BT-free Prefectures and results thereof

In view of the extensive spread of BT, and in accordance with standing procedures in the event of an occurrence of an exotic List A disease in Greece, nation-wide active and passive surveillance has been in place since August 1999 aimed at detecting a possible further spread of the disease outside the already affected Prefectures.

Modalities of surveillance in BT-free Prefectures and the results available to date are as follows:

3.1 Clinical surveillance

Intensive clinical surveillance has been carried out in sheep flocks throughout the country for the early detection of suspected cases of BT and appropriate laboratory investigation.

This surveillance is twofold, namely:

- active, targeting sheep flocks kept in or near likely vector breeding sites, as well as flocks that were moved from affected Prefectures within 30 days prior to confirmation of disease;
- passive, carried out randomly on the occasion of routine veterinary actions.

Within the framework of nation-wide clinical surveillance, 41 Prefectures have reported the absence of disease in their territories.

3.2 Serological surveillance

Serological surveillance augments disease awareness and vigilance measures in BT-free Prefectures and is carried out at three levels, namely:

- active, targeting livestock (sheep, goats and bovines) kept in or near likely vector breeding sites and animals originating from affected Prefectures, and including the investigation of suspected cases;
- passive, carried out randomly and especially when animals are to be moved to a different Prefecture or are returning from summer pastures;
- supplementary, carried out retrospectively on samples collected within the framework of other disease control programmes (e.g. *Brucella melitensis*).

Table 4: Serological surveillance in bluetongue-free Prefectures and results thereof

4. Bluetongue virus typing

Certain field strains of bluetongue virus (BTV) isolated in 1999 have now been provisionally typed in the Virology Laboratory, Athens, with the following results:

- Isolates from Lesvos and south-eastern Evros have been neutralized with BTV Type 4 anti-serum.
- Isolates from Rodopi have been neutralized with BTV Type 9 anti-serum.
- Isolates from Dodekanissa have been neutralized with BTV Type 4 anti-serum and there is compelling evidence of yet another, third, BTV type being present.

It should be noted that the epizootics in Dodekanissa in the winter of 1998 and in Bulgaria in the summer of 1999 were due to BTV Type 9.

All isolates available at the Virology Laboratory, Athens, will be sent to the Laboratory of Arbovirology, Pirbright, United Kingdom, for confirmation, while typing of more isolates is in progress in Athens.

On the basis of the above preliminary findings, the following main conclusions can be drawn:

- There are certainly two and probably more BTV serotypes circulating in the wider region, a fact infinitely complicating plans to control and eradicate the disease.
- In summer 1999, there were two simultaneous but separate primary incursions of BT in Greece, one from the north and one from the east, involving different BTV serotypes.

Both conclusions mentioned above highlight the dire necessity for multi-national cooperation aimed at ensuring efficient surveillance and control of the disease.

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NEWCASTLE DISEASE IN JAPAN
Follow-up report

FOLLOW-UP REPORT No. 2

Text of an e-mail received on 16 December 1999 from Dr Kenichi Matsubara, Director of Animal Health Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Tokyo:

End of previous report period: 16 November 1999 (see *Disease Information*, **12** [44], 161, dated 19 November 1999).

End of this report period: 16 December 1999.

New outbreaks:

Location	No. of outbreaks
Inba City, Chiba Prefecture	1
Sousa City, Chiba Prefecture	1
Hitachinaka City, Ibaraki Prefecture	1
Shimodate City, Ibaraki Prefecture	1

Description of affected population in the new outbreaks: chickens in hobby flocks.

Total number of animals in the new outbreaks:

<i>susceptible</i>	<i>cases</i>	<i>deaths</i>	<i>destroyed</i>	<i>slaughtered</i>
256	102	86	170	0

Diagnosis:

- A. Laboratory where diagnosis was made:** Livestock Hygiene Service Centers in Chiba and Ibaraki Prefectures.
- B. Diagnostic tests used:** pathological test, haemagglutination inhibition test and virus isolation.

Epidemiology:

- A. Source of agent / origin of infection:** a hobby flock in Sawara City, Chiba Prefecture, is suspected to be the source of the other outbreaks (see *Disease Information*, **12** [44], dated 19 November 1999). A tracing back study carried out revealed that all of the owners of the other infected flocks purchased chickens from the flock in question at a hobby chicken market held on 3 November.
- B. Other epidemiological details:** no additional cases have been identified since 25 November 1999.

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

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**NEWCASTLE DISEASE IN FRANCE
in pigeons**

(*Date of last previously reported outbreak:* October 1998).

EMERGENCY REPORT

Translation of a fax received on 16 December 1999 from Dr Isabelle Chmitelin, Head, International Health Coordinating Mission, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Paris:

Report date: 13 December 1999.

Nature of diagnosis: clinical and laboratory.

Date of initial detection of animal health incident: 17 November 1999.

Outbreaks:

Location	No. of outbreaks
Eure-et-Loir department	1

Description of affected population: pigeons.

Total number of animals in the outbreak:

<i>susceptible</i>	<i>cases</i>	<i>deaths</i>	<i>destroyed</i>	<i>slaughtered</i>
1,730	5	...	1,730	0

Diagnosis:

- A. Laboratory where diagnosis was made:** French Agency for Food Safety (AFSSA), Ploufragan.
- B. Diagnostic tests used:** virus isolation and determination of the intracerebral pathogenicity index (ICPI = 1.42).
- C. Causal agent:** avian paramyxovirus type 1, pigeon variant.

Epidemiology:

- A. Source of agent / origin of infection:** contamination by wild birds.
- B. Other epidemiological details:** no birds have left the infected farm.

Control measures during reporting period:

- stamping out, with destruction of carcasses in a rendering plant;
- tracing back and tracing forward;
- vaccination.

Due to the limited nature of this outbreak, which was confined to a pigeon farm remote from any poultry breeding area and any poultry marketing channels, France's Newcastle disease free status is unaffected.

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NEWCASTLE DISEASE IN AUSTRALIA Vaccination around Mangrove Mountain

Text of an e-mail received on 17 December 1999 from Dr Gardner Murray, Chief Veterinary Officer, Department of Primary Industries and Energy, Canberra:

Report date: 17 December 1999.

New South Wales has decided to implement a vaccination programme in the former *Surveillance Zone* around Mangrove Mountain, which has been in place since April 1999 (see *Disease Information*, **12** [13], 46, dated 9 April 1999).

The Newcastle disease surveillance programme within the *Surveillance Zone* has detected low virulent viruses on a number of farms. No virulent virus has been isolated, and there have been no disease problems detected since the last known cases in May 1999. However, genetic sequence studies suggest that some isolates are of the strain believed to be the progenitor type for the virulent virus that caused the previous outbreaks. Therefore, a vaccination approach has been adopted in an attempt to eliminate this low virulent progenitor strain.

The V4 vaccine, produced commercially from an endemic avirulent strain, will be used. Approximately 70 commercial farms in this zone will be required to vaccinate. This vaccinated zone will now be regarded as a *Newcastle Disease Free Zone with vaccination*. A new *Surveillance Zone* has been declared encompassing the Sydney region. Sampling and monitoring are continuing and movement restrictions continue to be imposed within the *Surveillance Zone*.

The vaccination strategy will provide additional assurances against any re-occurrence of clinical disease in the poultry production area. This approach will allow time for an extensive survey to determine the types, prevalence and distribution of Newcastle disease viruses to be undertaken initially in the Sydney region.

Standard operating procedures to ensure biosecurity are currently being finalised for the application of V4 vaccine and movement controls over products.

There has been no evidence of virulent Newcastle disease since the report published in *Disease Information*, **12** (36), 133, dated 17 September 1999. OIE principles of regionalisation are continuing to be applied. The rest of Australia should be recognised as a virulent Newcastle disease free zone.

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