



21 July 2000

Vol. 13 – No. 27

## Contents

Foot and mouth disease in Greece: follow-up report	103
Newcastle disease in Brazil	106
Bluetongue in Algeria: suspicion	107
Newcastle disease in Italy: current situation	107

### FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE IN GREECE Follow-up report

#### FOLLOW-UP REPORT No. 1

*Extract from an e-mail received on 17 July 2000 from Dr Vasilios Stylos, Head, Animal Health Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture, Athens:*

**End of previous report period:** 12 July 2000 (see *Disease Information*, **13** [26], 99, dated 14 July 2000).

**End of this report period:** 17 July 2000.

On 12 July 2000, foot and mouth disease (FMD) virus isolates were dispatched to the OIE World Reference Laboratory for FMD, Pirbright, United Kingdom. On 14 July, Pirbright Laboratory confirmed the Greek strain as virus type Asia 1.

**Estimated date of incursion:** 2 July 2000,  $\pm 1$  day, on the basis of the following considerations:

- estimated age of lesions in index case (on 10 July): 2 days;
- mean incubation period observed in the field: 5-7 days;
- negative serology in samples from clinically sick animals (indicative of recent infection).

#### **Animal husbandry practices in the Evros Delta**

Evros river constitutes the natural border line between Greece and Turkey along a 200-km axis running from north to south. The Evros Delta lies entirely within Greek territory and it forms a triangle approximately 30 km long (north-south) and 22 km wide (at the mouth of the river). The entire Delta area is a proclaimed wildlife sanctuary (mainly wildfowl) protected by the Ramsar Convention<sup>(1)</sup> and is uninhabited.

The arable land is intensively cultivated with corn, alfalfa, cotton and tobacco. Both the arable land after the harvest and the sand dunes and marshland along the river all year round, provide ample pasture and, consequently, are densely populated mainly with cattle but also with some sheep and goats. The Delta sustains more than 5,000 cattle and some 2,000 sheep and goats.

With the exception of two or three large herds of dairy cattle, which are permanently housed in purpose-built facilities, the great majority of cattle are free grazing beef cattle moving within the Delta without a fixed pattern in pursuit of suitable grazing land. As a rule, beef cattle lack permanent housing facilities, are naturally serviced and are considered as a low-cost land utilisation supplement. Nevertheless, all cattle and most of the sheep and goats within the Delta are individually identified by ear tags. Under these conditions, two or more cattle herds may comprise one epidemiological unit due to multiple contacts in common pasture and at watering troughs.

***Prospective epidemiology – forward tracing***

Animal movements from the Delta are stringently controlled and subject to a permit issued by the Local Veterinary Station after a clinical inspection and serological screening for a range of exotic diseases has been carried out with negative results. These are standing arrangements within the framework of the "EVROS" programme.

Furthermore, a retrospective search has produced negative results with respect to live animal movements from the Delta area during the past month.

Animal movements inside the Delta are not subject to a permit and may occur at the discretion of the farmer depending on the availability of pasture land.

On 13 July 2000, within the framework of forward tracing, a herd comprising 169 cattle was identified as a possible contact. The herd had been kept inside the "infected zone" and had relocated somewhere to the north of the surveillance zone on 6 July, prior to suspicion. Although no clinical signs of FMD were observed at follow-up inspection, the herd was duly destroyed on 14 July. Blood samples randomly collected at the time of destruction produced negative serological results.

Furthermore, on 17 July, one more herd comprising 200 cattle, which had a possible contact through common grazing inside the "infected zone" prior to suspicion, was identified to the north of the surveillance zone. Contiguous to this contact were two more cattle herds, comprising 145 animals, one sheep flock, comprising 60 animals, and two goat flocks, comprising 175 animals. No clinical signs of FMD were observed in any of these herds/flocks. Nevertheless, all susceptible animals present in potential contact herds/flocks were ear-tagged for preventive killing and destruction, scheduled to commence on 17 July and be completed on 18 July.

*Number of susceptible animals destroyed, as at 18 July 2000*

Reason for destruction	Cattle		Sheep/goats		Pigs	
	Herds	Animals	Flocks	Animals	Herds	Animals
Outbreaks	2	177	0	0	0	0
In-contact	26	1,725	4	485	1	30
TOTAL		1,902		485		30

Systematic clinical inspection of susceptible animals inside the protection and surveillance zones and follow-up investigations of potential contacts are in progress.

***Control and safeguard measures***

Greece is applying a stamping out/non vaccination policy aimed at eradicating FMD. The legal basis and technical content of applicable measures is as follows:

***1. Legal basis of measures***

Minimum measures for the control of FMD are laid down in Directive 85/511/EEC, as amended by Directive 93/423/EC.

Furthermore, in 1998 an effort was undertaken at the European Community level to review existing legislation and make an in-depth analysis of areas of particular interest and relevance. For this purpose, five Working Groups were established and the results of their deliberations, as recorded in Doc.VI/6319/98-Rev.1, led to a draft Directive updating and consolidating measures for the control of FMD (Doc.VI/6441/99).

The texts mentioned above have a bearing on the control of FMD and were taken into account by the Greek Authorities in applying control and safeguard measures under the current circumstances.

## ***2. Minimum European Community measures***

Minimum European Community measures for the control of FMD include:

- Killing and destruction, by burial on the site, of all susceptible animals present in infected and in-contact holdings.
- Disinfection of depopulated premises, equipment, vehicles, utensils, clothes, etc.
- Epidemiological inquiries and follow-up investigations.
- Establishment of protection and surveillance zones around outbreaks.
- Census of susceptible animals inside the protection and surveillance zones.
- Prohibition of movements of live susceptible animals inside and off protection and surveillance zones, with the exception of movements to pasture in specially designated areas inside the zones.
- Prohibition of movements of products of animal origin (edible/inedible) and feed off the zones.
- Suspension of slaughter of susceptible animals inside the zones.
- Suspension of markets, fairs, exhibitions inside the zones.
- Suspension of artificial insemination inside the zones.
- Strict control of movements of persons and vehicles inside and off the zones.

In addition to these minimum measures, the Greek Authorities have taken additional steps to prevent the spread of the disease, such as the following:

- On 10 July, a general ban was imposed on the dispatching of live susceptible animals, products of animal origin and feed from the the entire Prefecture of Evros. The ban will remain in place until the situation has been clarified.
- A retrospective investigation of consignments of products of animal origin dispatched from Evros during the previous 15 days has given negative results. The investigation excluded consignments of heat-treated meat and milk products exported to the Balkans, since these products present no risk of transmitting FMD virus.
- A general standstill on animal movements and slaughter in the entire Prefecture of Evros has been imposed until the situation is clarified.
- Movements of lay persons and vehicles within the Evros Delta have been drastically reduced and stringently controlled with the active involvement of the police, the army and border guards.

(1) The Convention on Wetlands, signed in Ramsar, Iran (see <http://www.ramsar.org>).

## NEWCASTLE DISEASE IN BRAZIL

(*Date of last previously reported outbreak:* August 1999).

### EMERGENCY REPORT

*Translation of an e-mail received on 17 July 2000 from Dr Hamilton Ricardo Farias, Director, Department of Animal Defence, Ministry of Agriculture and Supply, Brasilia:*

**Report date:** 17 July 2000.

**Nature of diagnosis:** laboratory.

**Date of initial detection of animal health incident:** 17 July 2000.

**Estimated date of first infection:** 16 June 2000.

### Outbreaks:

Location	No. of outbreaks
São José do Vale do Rio Preto, State of Rio de Janeiro	3

**Description of affected population:** poultry to supply the local market (State of Rio de Janeiro) reared in farms unconnected to the commercial poultry production system.

### Total number of animals in the outbreaks:

<i>susceptible</i>	<i>cases</i>	<i>deaths</i>	<i>destroyed</i>	<i>slaughtered</i>
76,500	1,400	1,400	75,100	0

### Diagnosis:

- A. **Laboratory where diagnosis was made:** Regional Laboratory for Animal Support (LARA, Campinas, Estado de São Paulo).
- B. **Diagnostic tests used:** intracerebral pathogenicity index.

### Epidemiology:

- A. **Source of agent / origin of infection:** investigations under way.
- B. **Mode of spread:** movement of persons.

**Control measures during reporting period:** stamping out.

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**BLUETONGUE IN ALGERIA**  
**Suspicion**

EMERGENCY REPORT

*Translation of an e-mail received on 18 July 2000 from Dr Rachid Bouguedour, Director of Animal Health Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Algiers:*

**Report date:** 18 July 2000.

**Date of initial detection of animal health incident:** 16 July 2000.

**Outbreaks:**

Location	No. of outbreaks
El Tarf (in the extreme north-eastern part of the country)	4

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

species	susceptible	cases	deaths	destroyed	slaughtered
ovi	250	98	12	0	0

**Diagnosis:** clinical. Samples were collected and submitted to Pirbright Reference Laboratory (United Kingdom) on 18 July 2000.

**Control measures during reporting period:**

- confinement of sick and infected animals, sheltered from insects;
- treatment of animals against ectoparasites;
- disinsection within and around the premises, and in all areas that are a potential habitat for insects.

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**NEWCASTLE DISEASE IN ITALY**  
**Current situation**

*Text of a communication received on 19 July 2000 from Dr Romano Marabelli, Director General of Veterinary Services, Ministry of Public Health, Rome:*

**End of this report period:** 30 June 2000.

The first outbreak of Newcastle disease was diagnosed at the beginning of May 2000 in Piemonte Region. Subsequently, numerous outbreaks were reported in several northern and central regions of Italy.

The total number of outbreaks notified to date is 227 and the regions affected are, in order of importance (taking into account the number of outbreaks notified), Toscana, Emilia-Romagna, Marche, Friuli, Umbria, Lombardia and Piemonte.

According to the epidemiological investigation it seems that the disease spread from a hatchery and from some dealers' flocks in Emilia-Romagna Region. The dealers had sold consignments of birds to others commercial outlets located in different regions. These dealers usually supply backyard flocks, and the disease therefore spread mainly to smallholdings. Birds of various species or categories (layers, turkeys, guinea fowl, pheasants) raised in these small flocks died due to the disease.

The virus isolated is APMV1 with an intracerebral pathogenicity index of 1.6-1.8.

### ***Surveillance***

A compulsory vaccination campaign is under way in the regions worst affected by the disease.

Consignments of birds must undergo clinical and serological controls when moved either within or out of regions where the compulsory vaccination plan is in force.

After the scheduled vaccination, a surveillance programme set up in order to establish the correct use of vaccine in commercial flocks will be implemented. Under this programme a statistically appropriate number of flocks will be sampled (50% prevalence with 95% confidence). In each flock 5 specimens will be collected (50% prevalence with 95% confidence).

### ***Eradication and prevention***

In all flocks where Newcastle disease has officially been confirmed all birds are slaughtered and destroyed in accordance with European Community legislation. Furthermore, other sanitary measures such as protection and surveillance zones are enforced.

Preventive measures are both direct and indirect (vaccination).

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