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NEWCASTLE DISEASE IN ITALY Additional information

EMERGENCY REPORT (CONTD) - SEE *DISEASE INFORMATION*, **16** (30), 181

Information received on 25 July 2003 from Dr Romano Marabelli, Director General of Veterinary Services, Ministry of Public Health, Rome:

Report date: 25 July 2003.

Description of affected population: chicks raised for personal consumption (backyard flock located in the town of Palermo).

Diagnosis:

- A. Laboratory where diagnosis was made:** Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie (Padova), OIE Reference Laboratory for Newcastle disease.
- B. Diagnostic tests used:** virus isolation in embryonated eggs.
- C. Causal agent:** the amino acid sequence at the cleavage site indicates a highly pathogenic strain of paramyxovirus. Intracerebral pathogenicity index: 1.8.

Epidemiology:

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

Control measures: protection and surveillance zones were enforced in application of the relevant European Union legislation. In the protection zone there are seven backyard flocks and in the surveillance zone there are three commercial flocks. No suspected cases have been reported in the flocks under restriction.

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BLUETONGUE IN TAIPEI CHINA Laboratory findings

(Disease never reported before in Taipei China).

EMERGENCY REPORT

Information received on 28 July 2003 from Dr Watson H.T. Sung, Deputy Director General, Bureau of Animal and Plant Inspection and Quarantine, Council of Agriculture, Taipei:

Report date: 18 July 2003.

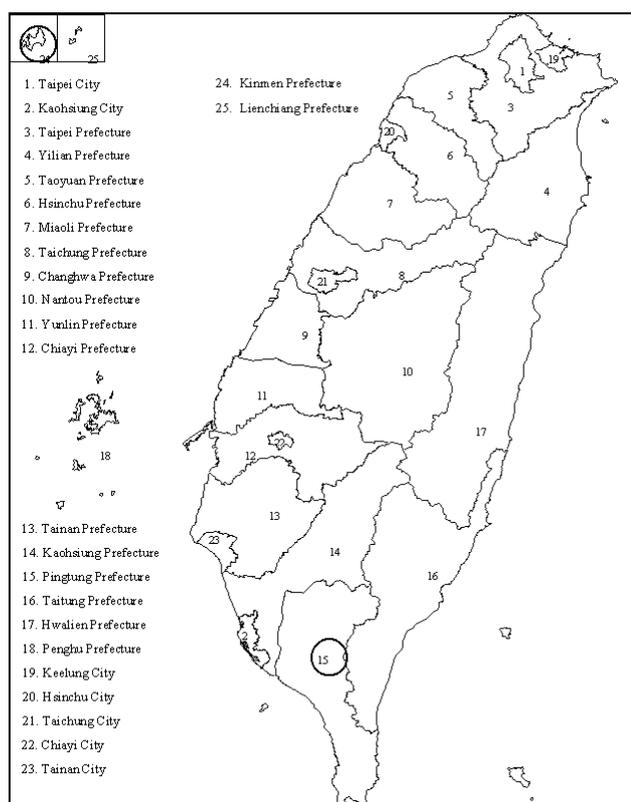
Nature of diagnosis: laboratory.

Date of initial detection of infection: 18 July 2003.

Sera collected on 2 May 2003 within the framework of routine serological surveillance for bluetongue were found to be positive. The tracing-back investigations that were carried out did not lead to the detection of any animals presenting clinical signs of bluetongue.

Outbreaks:

Location	No. of outbreaks
Kinmen Prefecture	1
Pingtung Prefecture	1



Total number of animals in the outbreaks:

<i>species</i>	<i>susceptible</i>	<i>cases</i>	<i>deaths</i>	<i>destroyed</i>	<i>slaughtered</i>
bov	278	0*	0	0	0
cap	70	0*	0	0	0

* no animals have displayed clinical signs of bluetongue

Diagnosis:

A. Laboratory where diagnosis was made: National Institute for Animal Health (NIAH).

B. Diagnostic tests used:

- competitive ELISA⁽¹⁾: positive;
- electron microscopy: detection of the orbivirus;
- RT-PCR⁽²⁾: positive for bluetongue virus;
- DNA sequencing.

The serotype of the virus will be sought.

Source of agent / origin of infection: under investigation.

Control measures:

- Farms where seropositive animals were detected have been placed under quarantine. In addition, for further clinical examination purposes, the Livestock Disease Control Centres in the Prefectures have imposed restrictions on the movement of susceptible animals.
- Cleaning and disinfection operations have commenced in order to decrease the population of insect vectors.
- Further monitoring for possible active bluetongue infection has been imposed around zoos and farms at risk.

(1) ELISA: enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay.

(2) RT-PCR: reverse transcription – polymerase chain reaction.

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AVIAN INFLUENZA IN BELGIUM ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Information received on 29 July 2003 from Dr Luc Lengelé, Chief Veterinary Officer, Animal Health and Animal Products Department, Federal State Service for Public Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment, Brussels:

Report date: 28 July 2003.

In *Disease Information*, **16** [12], 73, and **16** [13], 80, dated 21 and 28 March 2003, respectively, information can be found on a suspected outbreak of avian influenza in Belgium.

In *Disease Information*, **16** [16], 98, dated 18 April 2003, and up to and including **16** [29], 169, dated 18 July 2003, information is provided on an epizootic of (highly pathogenic) avian influenza in Belgium.

The report published on 18 July 2003 makes it clear that avian influenza has been eradicated in Belgium and states that "all restriction measures in Limburg province were lifted at noon on 8 July 2003 and in Antwerp province at noon on 15 July".

However, in the report dated 24 March 2003 published on 28 March 2003 the last sentence states that "in the light of these favourable results, the restriction measures applied in the buffer zone will be lifted" and, as no date was given for the lifting of the measures, the message could be misinterpreted as implying that these restrictions are still be in place today. In fact, the restriction measures relating to the suspected outbreak of 11 March 2003 were lifted on 24 March 2003, the day the official results of the virus isolation tests on embryonated eggs were received from the National Reference Laboratory (Veterinary and Agrochemical Research Centre – VAR), at Ukkel.

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**RABIES IN SWITZERLAND
in a dog**

(*Date of previous outbreak of rabies in Switzerland reported to the OIE:* September 2002 [in a bat]).

EMERGENCY REPORT

Information received on 29 July 2003 from Dr Hans Wyss, Director of the Federal Veterinary Office, Bern:

Report date: 29 July 2003.

Nature of diagnosis: post-mortem and laboratory.

Date of confirmation of diagnosis: 24 July 2003.

Estimated date of first infection: 1 May 2003.

Outbreaks:

Location	No. of outbreaks
Canton of Geneva	1

Description of affected population: a stray dog of unknown origin.

In May 2003, the dog – then aged three months – was caught on a road in the Canton of Geneva. It was taken to an animal shelter in Bernex, Canton of Geneva. On 25 June, the dog was adopted by a family living in Nyon, Canton of Geneva.

Diagnosis: on 15 July 2003, the dog showed neurological signs, and the consulted veterinarian subsequently euthanised it. On 24 July, rabies was confirmed at the National Reference Laboratory.

A. Laboratory where diagnosis was made: Virology Unit, Veterinary Hospital, Bern.

B. Diagnostic tests used: direct immunofluorescence (brain).

Epidemiology:

A. Source of agent / origin of infection: the most likely origin of the dog is illegal transport as an infected 'holiday animal' from a rabies-infected area into Switzerland. Given the short distance (2 km) between the place where the dog was found and the French border, it is also possible that the infected animal was abandoned in France and crossed the border to Switzerland.

B. Other epidemiological details:

- Switzerland declared itself free from rabies as from 1999⁽¹⁾.
- Vaccination of cats and dogs against rabies is compulsory in the Canton of Geneva.

Control measures: prophylactic vaccination of persons exposed to the dog after 15 June. Potential contact animals are being traced and subjected to veterinary examination.

(1) see OIE *Bulletin*, Vol. 111, No. 3, pp 258-260

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