



EU VETERINARY EMERGENCY TEAM
(EUVET) MISSION
Sheep pox and goat pox in Spain
(17-18 October 2022)

PAFF Committee meeting, 29-30 November 2022



- Experts:
 - ✓ EUVET: Tsviatko Alexandrov, Kris De Clercq, Nick De Regge
 - ✓ European Commission: Dimitrios Dilaveris
- Period: 17 – 18 October 2022
- Target regions of the mission:
 - ✓ Day 1: Madrid: meeting with Central OVS, NRL and Regional OVS Castilla La Mancha
 - ✓ Day 2. Seville: meeting with Regional OVS Andalucía

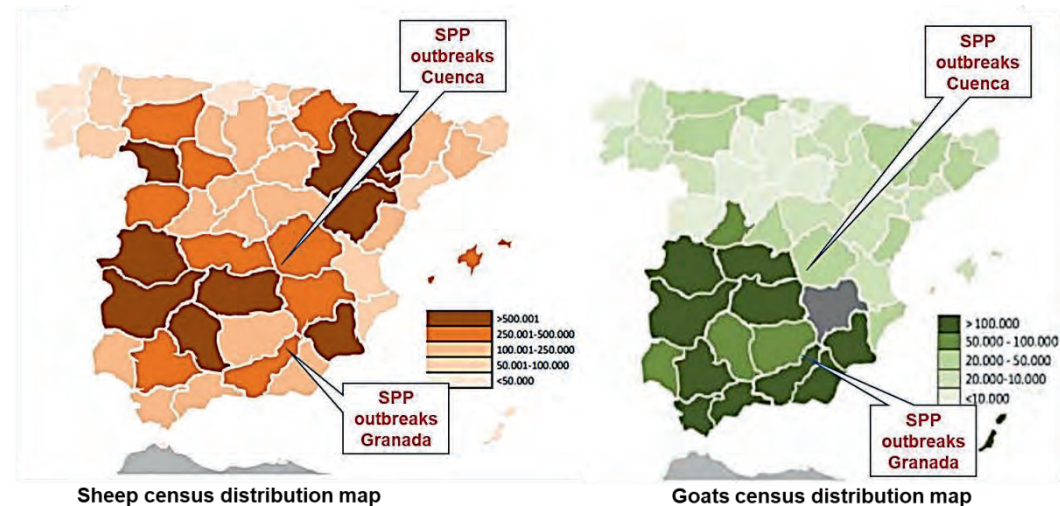


- ToR

- ✓ The experts should provide scientific, technical, managerial and practical assistance on the spot on the refinement of the most suitable control and eradication measures for sheep pox and goat pox (SPGP) under local conditions, especially as regards preparedness, awareness activities, surveillance and coordination efforts, in kept ovine and caprine animals.
- ✓ The experts should report exclusively to the Commission services and the authorities of Spain. Continuous contact should be guaranteed between the team, the Commission services and authorities of Spain.

The sheep and goat sector

- 15 - 16 million heads of sheep
- 2.5 - 3 million heads of goats

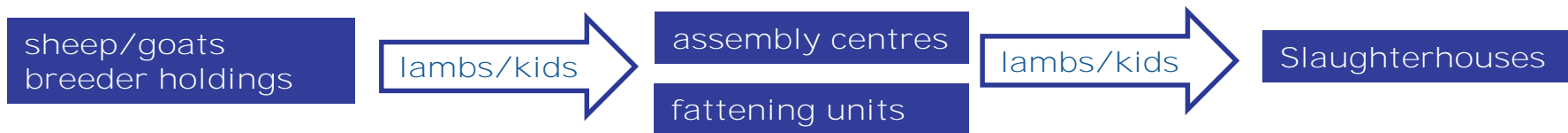


- The sheep sector is mainly oriented to meat production with a high number of small size farms; compared to milk holdings (lower number, but larger census). The goat sector is mainly oriented to milk production.

Sheep and goats main production systems in Spain:

- *Extensive production system, less professionalized, holdings generally smaller in size, most of them associated to production of lambs, with animals usually reared outdoor during the day and kept in barns during the night, the animals graze on own pastures or shared pastures with other holdings in the area.*
- *Intensive production system, consisting in holdings with animals located in barns that are reared on feed, normally larger in size with a higher number of animals, associated to either production of milk or production of lambs, and run by highly professionalized farmers.*
- *Wool production is not considered an important sector by the Spanish competent veterinary authority.*

Movement patterns



- *Only breeding animals are authorised to be moved from farm to farm.*
- *Lambs and kids can only be moved to assembly centres or fattening units, and from these to the slaughterhouse.*

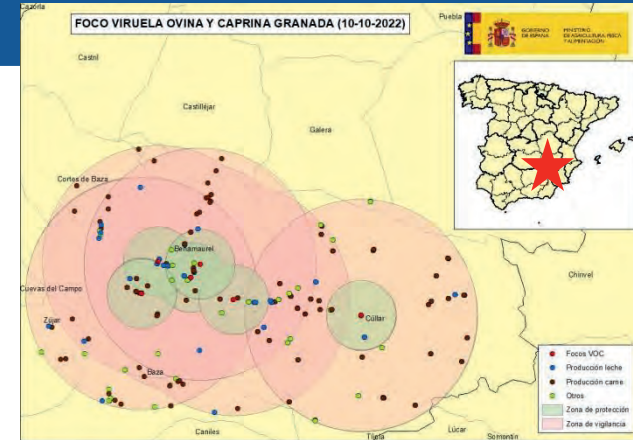
Evolution of the Sheep pox (SPP) outbreaks in Spain (by the time of the mission)

Between 19th September – 18th October, Spain notified 17 outbreaks of SPP (last outbreak confirmed on 18th October, notified in ADIS on 19 October 2022), divided over two clusters:

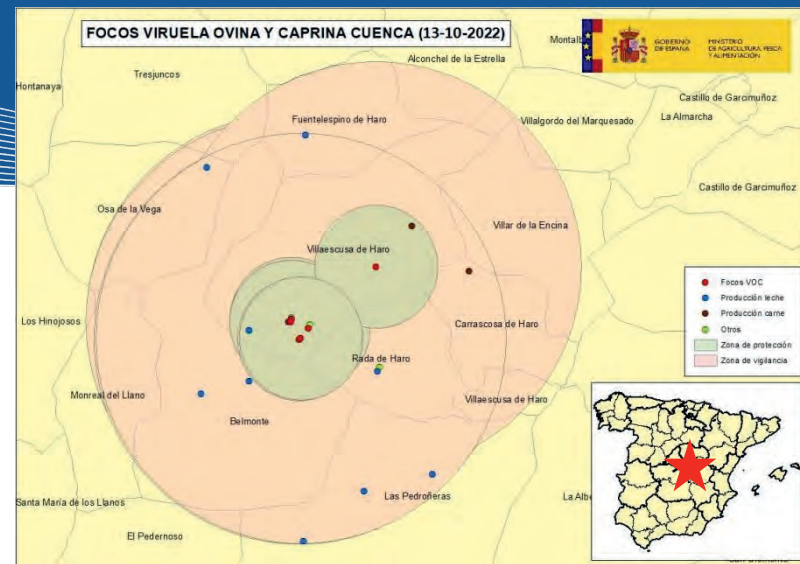
- *Cluster 1. province of Granada, Andalucía County (9 outbreaks - all breeding farms for meat production)*
- *Cluster 2. province of Cuenca, Castilla - La Mancha County (8 outbreaks – 3 fattening farms, 2- assembly centers and 3 breeding farms for milk production).*



Epidemiological considerations - Granada



- *The source of infection for the first detected outbreak of SPP in Benamaurel, Granada is still unknown. The following hypotheses are considered as the most probable route of SPPV introduction:*
 - ✓ *by workers and shepherds coming from Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. (However, there is no information that such workers were present in the concerned farm*
 - ✓ *introduced mechanically after the Eid al-Adha festival (1st half of July 2022), and was related to movements of people and goods to and from North Africa).*
 - ✓ *with a contaminated truck from North Africa (however unlikely due to special protocol for vehicles coming)*
- *The high density of farms, the large small ruminants population, the delay in detection of SPP in the first outbreak, the occurrence of common grazing and sharing of pasture, and other links between the farms have probably facilitated the spread of the disease to 8 other farms in the area.*



Epidemiological considerations – Cuenca

- *The most probably explanation for the jump of the virus to Cuenca - Castilla - La Mancha was via movement of infected animal/s from an Assembly center of Granada located at 200m from outbreak 2022/1 to an assembly center in Cuenca, outbreak 2022/3. (However there was not any clinical or laboratory positive animal after the completion of the investigations in the assembly center of Granada being the most plausible hypothesis that a particular batch of lambs could have been infected by some indirect contact with the outbreak 2022/1)*
- *In the restricted area of Cuenca, 6 out of 8 outbreaks are considered to belong to one epidemiological unit. They belong to the same owner and share veterinarians, workers and machinery.*

Control measures

- *Stamping out. The culling is performed on the spot and completed usually 3-4 days after confirmation of an outbreak*
- *Safe disposal of carcasses to the closest authorized rendering plant under channelized procedure*
- *Withdrawal of risk products (bedding, manure and feed), cleaning and disinfection.*
- *Awareness*

LA VIRUELA OVINA Y CAPRINA
ES UNA ENFERMEDAD MUY GRAVE QUE HA APARECIDO EN ESPAÑA Y AFECTA A GANADO OVINO Y CAPRINO
EN NINGÚN CASO SE TRANSMITE A LOS SERES HUMANOS

¿Cómo podemos saber si nuestros ovejos o cabras pueden haber contraído la enfermedad?

1 Examine cuidadosamente a los animales de su granja: principalmente las ovejas, pero también las cabras

- En la cabeza
- En el abdomen
- En el pecho
- En las axilas
- En el área genital
- En la base y bajo la cola
- En el cuello
- En cualquier otra parte del cuerpo del animal sin pelo

2 Buscar cuidadosamente lesiones de esos tipos:
 El diagnóstico se realiza observando lesiones, al menos, en una parte del cuerpo del animal, en su momento. Lesiones típicas en forma de costras, llagas.



3 SI SE DETECTA CUALQUIERA DE ESTOS SÍNTOMAS O LESIONES COMPATIBLES CON LA ENFERMEDAD, COMUNIQUE DE FORMA INMEDIATA A LOS SERVICIOS VETERINARIOS OFICIALES ESTOS HALLAZGOS Y SIGA SUS INSTRUCCIONES.

SI SOSPECHA QUE SUS ANIMALES PUEDE HABER CONTRAÍDO LA ENFERMEDAD, NO SOPAR Y AVISE DE FORMA INMEDIATA A LOS VETERINARIOS. TODO EL GANADO DE SU REDEÁN PUEDE ESTAR EN PELIGRO.

Para más información, consulte en cualquier momento con los servicios veterinarios oficiales de su zona.

¿Qué medidas debo tomar para prevenir la llegada de Viruela Ovina y Caprina a mi zona de explotación?

- Evitar introducir al ganado de otras explotaciones a nuestra explotación, así como comprar en él, a partir de explotaciones de riesgo a medio plazo.
- Evitar el contacto directo, especialmente, durante el traslado de carne y otros productos entre explotaciones.
- Reforzar la limpieza y desinfección de nuestras explotaciones, en especial, los comederos y bebederos, para la entrada y salida de la ganadería a nuestras explotaciones.
- Consultar a los Servicios Veterinarios Oficiales cualquier procedimiento para la bioseguridad de las explotaciones ganaderas.



Restricted zones

Restricted zones were implemented for every outbreak, including a 3 km protection and a 10 km surveillance zone. The measures in the restricted zones are in compliance with Delegated Regulation (EU) 202/687 of the Commission and include:

- *Census of all farms and susceptible animals*
- *Visits and clinical inspections of all farms every 7-10 days*
- *Ban on movements of animal and risk products*
- *Prohibition of fairs, markets, exhibitions and other concentrations of livestock.*
- *Enhanced biosecurity and passive surveillance.*
- *Official investigations are performed in farms located outside the restriction zones but considered at risk due to the existence of previous risk movements*



Grazing of animals

- *Grazing of animals in the restricted zones (especially in Granada, Andalucía) was prohibited since first suspicion but compliance was low. The problem has started to be tackled down 10 days before the time of the EUVET mission, thanks to:*
 - ✓ *raising of awareness of farmers*
 - ✓ *approval of economic support to the farmers*
 - ✓ *enhanced cooperation with the police*



The main obstacles in eradicating SPGP

- *This was the first introduction of SPPV in Spain after more than 50 years and veterinary services were therefore faced with an unexpected and exceptional situation.*
- *High density of farms and susceptible animals in the restricted areas (45 000 SR in the restricted area of Granada and 41000 in the restricted area of Cuenca).*
- *Grazing practices at common sites in some areas and challenges in long-term sustainability of a grazing prohibition.*
- *Any delay in the detection of new outbreaks, and in outbreak management will increase the risk for new outbreaks and escape of SPGP outside of the restricted zones.*



Recommendations on the strategy for eradication of SPGP in Spain

- 1. Stamping out of infected herds, combined with standstill and strict movement control should remain the basic method for control and eradication of SPGP*
- 2. Clinical surveillance and passive reporting by farmers and private veterinarians is of the greatest importance for recognition of the disease and should be enforced on the whole territory of Spain.*
- 3. Very high disease awareness among the farmers, veterinarians and all other workers involved should be in place all over the country.*
- 4. The establishment of restriction zones should be based on risk assessment to guarantee the containment of the infection within the zone(s) defined.*



5. *In the restricted zone clinical surveillance must be maintained. To assure that animals in the incubation period could be detected, this clinical surveillance can be supplemented by virological surveillance (testing of oral swabs and blood).*
6. *Exchange of information and the coordination of the control measures are to be strengthened across the different authorities: local and national veterinary services, police, etc. Regular evaluation with proposals for corrective actions, if needed, is recommended.*
7. *Regular meetings to be performed at central and regional levels between the competent veterinary authorities and the sheep and goat industry, associations and other relevant stakeholders*
8. *All measures implemented should be strictly documented and records kept.*
9. *The coordination and cooperation with EURL should continue.*
10. *In the restricted zones, movement restrictions must remain in place for as long as needed ensuring that there are no direct or indirect contacts between the different flocks. Sharing grazing sites must be prevented in areas of risk.*

11. *The competent veterinary authorities should make every possible effort to reduce the time needed to confirm or rule out suspicions and implement quickly stamping out and cleaning and disinfection in case of disease confirmation.*
12. *Detailed epidemiological surveys should be finalized, as soon as possible, to investigate the source of infection and modes of transmission.*
13. *Enforced biosecurity measures should be implemented at all levels: farms, slaughterhouses, transports*
14. *Milk collection: all vehicles entering or leaving farms should be properly disinfected to avoid spreading of the disease.*
15. *Slaughterhouses - Actions to be taken in case a disease suspicion is detected inside the slaughterhouse should be known by the Local Authorities and the slaughterhouse personnel.*
16. *Disease-specific biosecurity measures must be documented and provided in writing to the stakeholders involved.*



17. Vaccination. Implementation of a vaccination campaign should at least be envisioned as an additional measure if needed.

- ✓ anticipative work is done to prepare a potential vaccination campaign (possible vaccination scheme, availability and choice of vaccine etc.), including administrative procedures for purchase of a vaccine and road maps on implementation of a vaccination campaign.*



Conclusions and acknowledgements

- *The EUVET mission was able to revise the SPGP situation, to give a first assessment on the implementation of the control strategy and to list a series of recommendations to reach the objectives of eliminating SPGP from the two infected areas in Spain.*
- *The mission was very well organized by the veterinary authorities. The members of the EUVET mission wish to thank all the veterinary authority representatives present in Madrid and Seville for their excellent contributions to the discussions which were undertaken in a very open and transparent manner.*

Thank you for your attention!