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Health and Food Safety Directorate General

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Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed
Section *Animal Health and Welfare*
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SUMMARY REPORT

A.01 General information by Member States.

No item raised.

A.02 Information on a report from the Commission to the European Parliament and to the Council on the technical and economic feasibility of introducing mandatory electronic identification of bovine animals throughout the Union.

The Commission presented the report, and the main conclusion that it will not propose any legislative initiative at this stage. The report can be found under: [EUR-Lex - 52023DC0498 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

A.03 Guidelines on the prevention, control and eradication of African swine fever in the Union ('ASF guidelines').

The Commission updated the Committee on the ongoing revision of ASF guidelines. Inter-service consultation is ongoing and should be finalised in due time.

A.04 Best practices for alternative egg production system.

On behalf of the Commission, Prof. Bas Rodenburg from the Utrecht University, presented the results of a two-year EP pilot project on "[Best practices for transitioning to higher welfare cage-free egg production systems](#)".

The project was aimed to help egg producers meet market demand by providing practical guidance on how to shift to alternative higher-welfare cage-free systems and thus guarantee that they stay in business. It investigated the different systems for laying hens and identified those that are optimal for animal health and welfare and provide recommendations, including economic aspects. The results of the project were presented in four countries where alternative rearing systems are still not predominant (Belgium, Portugal, Poland, and Spain) and, in May 2023, at the final event in Brussels, attended by representatives of Member States, policy makers, agriculture, industry, civil society, and researchers.

A.05 Information from Member States on African swine fever.

Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Latvia, Italy, Poland, Germany, Greece, and Sweden provided an update on the ASF epidemiological situation, particular attention was given to Sweden that reported the disease for the first time on 6 September 2023.

A.06 Report on the ASF EUVET mission to Italy (9-13 July 2023).

The representative of the EUVET mission provided a brief presentation on the main findings and recommendations of the ASF EUVET mission to Italy, held in July 2023. Several of the recommendations are valid for all Member States.

A.07 Report on the ASF EUVET mission to Croatia (11-13 July 2023).

The representative of the EUVET mission provided a brief presentation on the main findings and recommendations of the ASF EUVET mission to Croatia, held in July 2023.

A.08 Information from Spain on sheep pox and goat pox.

Spain informed the Commission and Member States that no new outbreaks of Sheep and Goat Pox (SGP) were recorded since mid-May. Protection and Surveillance Zones have been lifted and the Further Restricted Zone (FRZ) is expected to be lifted by 25 September, provided that the epidemiological situation remains stable.

A.09 Report on the sheep pox and goat pox EUVET mission to Cyprus (25-27 July 2023).

A member of the expert team presented the main findings and recommendations of an EUVET mission on Sheep and Goat pox (SGP) in Cyprus that took place on 25-27 July 2023. The visit focused on the northern part of Cyprus where 8 outbreaks were recorded between 26/5 and 25/7 in the Famagusta and Nicosia districts, all north of the “Green Line”, in areas in which the Government of the Republic of Cyprus does not exercise effective control. Wool shearers originating from Türkiye, were identified as possible risk factors for disease incursion. Control measures include the partial stamping out of the affected holdings, the establishment of restriction zones around them (ranging from 3 to 8km radius), where vaccination is practiced with a vaccine of Turkish origin and biosecurity measures. Recommendations emphasize, among others, on the implementation of total stamping out, biosecurity measures, the establishment of larger restricted zones for longer periods, disease awareness and possible expansion of vaccination in case of more outbreaks.

A.10 Information from Member States on highly pathogenic avian influenza.

France and the Netherlands presented the information regarding the plan for vaccinating against highly pathogenic avian influenza in poultry and captive birds, respectively. Vaccination of poultry in France will start on 1st of October, targeting commercial fattening duck establishments. Vaccination of captive birds in the Netherlands will be implemented in thirteen zoos. The vaccination in both Member States is planned for one year.

B.01 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision on the evolution of animal diseases in the Union.

No item raised.

B.02 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation amending Annexes I and II to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 laying down special control measures for African swine fever.

Commission Implementing Regulation amending Annexes I and II to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 was presented for vote with positive opinion, to review the restricted zones in Latvia, Poland, Germany, Italy and Croatia.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

M.01 Information from the Commission on the recent CVOs meeting on ASF in the Western Balkan Countries.

The Commission presented the outcome of the recent CVOs meeting on ASF in the Western Balkan countries that took place on 31 August 2023.

M.02 Information from the Commission on the upcoming BTSF Workshop on ASF (Spain, 3-5 October 2023).

The Commission reminded the Committee about the planned specific BTSF workshop on ASF in wild boar that will take place on 3-5 October 2023 in Spain. Several places are still available for participants therefore the Commission encouraged the delegations to register for the event.

M.03 Information from the Commission on the upcoming 21st Meeting of the Standing Group of Experts on African swine fever under GF-TADs (28-29 September 2023).

The Commission provided information on the upcoming 21st meeting of the SGE on ASF, topic will be the tool and effectiveness of the ‘carcass search and removal’ in the ASF epidemiology and management.

M.04 Information from Germany on a Newcastle disease case in illegally moved birds.

Germany informed on the Newcastle disease virus having been detected during the quarantine of captive birds illegally introduced in that Member State. All the measures requested by the relevant EU legislation have been implemented to contain and control the disease. Germany also informed on the restrictions imposed by Ukraine to the imports of poultry, following the notification of the outbreak in ADIS, which does not specifically differentiate between poultry and non-poultry and asked the Commission if possible to arrange that separate notifications could be possible in ADIS for Newcastle disease in poultry and in non-poultry.

M.05 BTV in the Netherlands.

First notified on 8 September 2023 since 2008. Unknown origin yet. Confirmed as serotype 3 by the EURL. It has started in the centre of the country but now there are new detections eastwards. Mostly affecting sheep. Member States asked about the mortality rates, that are unknown yet and about the size of the affected zone, that is considered by the Competent Authority as the whole country. The Commission asked about the BTV status for the whole country and the Competent Authority confirmed that the BTV status has been suspended for the whole country. The Commission will amend in due time Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/620 accordingly.

M.06 Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) situation in Portugal.

The epidemic started in July 2023 although measures (national and those affecting movements within the EU) were already implemented since December 2022 due to the outbreaks in Spain. Currently the whole country is affected and subject to movements within the EU restrictions. Mortality and morbidity seem very low.