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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 about a virtual EUVET mission in Poland on rabies.

The Team Leader of the EUVET team presented the epidemiological situation, the conclusions and the recommendations. Polish colleagues pointed out that they are not in a position to implement an additional campaign in the coming weeks in the areas where the disease is on-going as it was recommended by the EUVET. The Commission insisted on the fact that there is a need to take decisive actions including this additional campaign in the coming weeks to control the worst outbreak of rabies in the recent time.

A.03 Information from Member States on highly pathogenic avian influenza.

Poland, Lithuania and the Netherlands presented updated information in relation with the situation of highly pathogenic avian influenza (5HPAI) on their territory. Additional information was requested by the Commission on the conditions set by the Polish competent authority to allow restocking of the poultry establishments in the highly affected area by HPAI and on the surveillance envisaged to confirm the absence of the HPAI virus in the environment in that affected area before lifting the restrictions and allowing restocking.

A.04 Information on the state of play and actions related to the implementation of the Animal Health Law.

An update of the recently adopted and published legislation was given in the introduction.

A presentation was given as regards the maintenance of disease freedom in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689. The main question was on how to calculate the time period of two years following the granting of the disease free status from infection with BTV. The Commission proposed the following possibilities :

- If the disease was never detected, the switch to a more flexible regime or risk based approach can already be done

- If the disease was detected, two possibilities to calculate the period (to be chosen by Member States):
 - a. On the day the restricted zones were lifted in accordance with Article 6(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1266/2007 based on the information available for the competent authority (subject to easy monitoring)
 - b. On the day the free status was granted under the AHL rules (IR (EU) 2021/620)

A reminder was given as regards the submission of the compulsory eradication programmes for category B diseases and the Union surveillance programme for AI that should have been sent to the Commission on 31 May 2021.

The Commission presented the legal framework for disease notification as foreseen by Regulation (EU) 2020/2002 on disease notification, Regulation (EU) 2020/689 on disease surveillance and Regulation (EU) 2021/620 on disease-free status. It was stressed that notifications in non disease-free-areas should not be carried out by Member States as foreseen by Article 3 (1)(b) and Art 3 (1)(c) of Regulation (EU) 2020/2002. However all outbreaks will need to be reported under Union reporting (once per year) as per Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2020/2002.

A presentation was given as regards entry into the Union of hay and straw. The Commission provided an explanation on the legislative background and in order to the legal basis to develop rules under the new animal health framework. The Commission invited Member States to provide for their opinion in this regard.

A.05 Information from the European Food Safety Authority on African swine fever related Scientific Opinion and Technical Reports.

From the beginning of 2021 EFSA published and adopted three Scientific Opinions:

- (i) risks of ASF virus spread through matrices,
- (ii) exit strategy and pigs outdoor-farming; and
- (iii) the annual technical report on ASF.

EFSA presented to the member countries a summary on the work done, the conclusions and the recommendations of these activities.

A.06 Information from the Member States on African swine fever.

Germany, Poland and Slovakia provided an update of their epidemiological situation. In certain areas of the three member countries ASF virus is in an epidemic phase in the wild porcine animals population, this situation increased the risk of spread to the free areas of those countries, therefore the restricted zones were enlarged to prevent further spread.

A.07 Information about two outbreaks of Aujeszky's disease in France.

There were two recent outbreaks of Aujeszky's Disease in France in department of Allier and in department of Hautes-Alpes in officially free areas and establishments. France shared the main epidemiological findings in both cases.

The first outbreak occurred in a little establishment with wild boars in March 2021, the second one a small outdoor production of pigs in April 2021. The epidemiological survey was carried out and did not yield any positive findings. The main hypothesis was infection via wild boar.

In both cases the serological suspicion of Aujeszky's disease were found via the annual prophylaxis campaign and without any clinical signs. Measures taken in the outbreak-farms: stamping out, cleaning / disinfection and strengthening of biosecurity measures. The disease-free status of Allier and Hautes-Alpes was recovered at 16/04/2021.

The French colleagues stated that without clinical signs or epidemiological links the only possibility to confirm a suspected case is to isolate the virus. In particular for Aujeszky's disease, herpesvirus is not detectable during latency period by virus isolation techniques. France is working with others members states to suggest to the Commission clarifications for AD confirmation.

A.08 Summary after vote on draft Commission Implementing Regulation laying down rules for the identification and registration of equine animals and establishing model identification documents for those animals (document SANTE/7004/2019).

The Commission thanked Member States for their support and also for the detailed comments of those Member States that were not in a position to support the proposal. The Commission reminded Member States that the new model of Single Lifetime Identification Document will be applicable as of 28 January 2022, the date of application of the Regulation (EU) 2019/6 on Veterinary Medicinal Products.

A.09 Presentation from EFSA on the overview of the latest highly pathogenic avian influenza epidemic season in EU.

EFSA presented the overview of the results of the assessment of the data collected in relation to the highly pathogenic avian influenza in wild birds, poultry and captive birds in the EU since October 2020 with main conclusions and options for response.

A.10 Presentation from EURL on the genetic data of the highly pathogenic avian influenza virus strains that have circulated recently in the EU.

EURL presented the updates on the genetic characteristics of HPAI H5NX viruses that circulated in Europe in 2020/2021 and analyses of the situation of HPAI in wild birds in Europe in 2020-2021.

A.11 Information from Denmark and Finland concerning the aquatic disease IHN.

Seven outbreaks located in five different water catchments in DK have been confirmed to be infected, to date. There have been no new outbreaks in the past two weeks but testing is ongoing on a single contact farm and on many Put & Take fisheries. A decision will be made shortly concerning the voluntary suspension of the IHN free status of Denmark, which expires on 23 June. Finland had two outbreaks as a result of movements of trout from Denmark. Both establishments produce fish for human consumption and do not supply other establishments. Germany commented that they have had 'several outbreaks' associated with movements from Denmark, and Austria reported that they had two outbreaks associated with movements from Denmark. There is ongoing and regular communication between the Commission and the Danish competent authority.

A.12 Presentation of a draft on technical specifications for the format for the lists of approved or registered establishments, plants or operators handling animal by-products inside the European Union and in third countries.

The Commission presented an updated version of the technical specifications for the listing of operators, establishments and plants handling animal by-products. During discussion some Member States asked for clarification of certain activities codes and expressed concerns as regards transition of the national lists of approved and registered operators, establishments and plants from national databases into the TRACES NT database.

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 Annex I to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/605 laying down special control measures for African swine fever.

In order to take account of recent developments in the epidemiological situation of African swine fever in the Union, and in order to combat the risks associated with the spread of that disease in a proactive manner, new restricted zones of a sufficient were demarcated for Poland and Slovakia and duly listed as restricted zones I and II in Annex I to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/605.

Outcome of the vote by written consultation: Favourable opinion.

C.01 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and the Council with regard to the Union antigen, vaccine and diagnostic reagent banks.

The representative of the Commission informed the Committee about the timeline foreseen for this document, including the planned vote. The amendments introduced in the new revision were explained in detail, as well as comments and questions submitted in writing by one Member States were replied.

C.02 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and the Council with regard to registration of aquaculture establishments and record keeping of operators.

The draft presented for discussion included comments made by Member States following a Working Group meeting which was held on 29 March. Attention was drawn to a number of changes which had been made, but particular attention was drawn to one Article concerning the registration of pet shops, and Member States were asked to compare this with the previous proposal, and provide their feedback. This Regulation will be presented for public feedback in the coming weeks and it is proposed to present it for vote in September.

M.01 Commission update on reports received on infection with SARS-CoV-2 in minks and other animals of the family Mustelidae and in raccoon dogs.

The Commission provided an update on reporting received on infection with SARS-CoV-2 in minks and other animals of the family Mustelidae and in raccoon dogs based on Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/788 of 12 May 2021. These updates addressed the outbreak in Spain.