

About this dossier

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Eradication: Final report for Bovine Brucellosis 2019

For each approved annual or multi-annual programme Member States shall submit to the Commission by the 30 April each year an annual detailed technical and financial report covering the previous year. That report shall include the results achieved and a detailed account of eligible costs incurred (Art 14 of Regulation (EU) No 652/2014).

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Reporting period

From: 2019

To: 2019

Year of implementation: 2019

1. Technical implementation of the programme

1.1 Description and evaluation of the evolution of the epidemiological situation, the technical implementation of the activities foreseen under the programme and the cost-effectiveness of the programme.

The programme for the eradication of *B. abortus* is annual and covers the following objectives:

- to continue with, and step up, animal health measures to prevent brucellosis in bovine and buffalo;
- to intensify disease eradication in infected holdings so they can be declared officially brucellosis-free or, for holdings where vaccination could be applied, brucellosis-free;
- to retain the officially disease-free status (or disease-free status where vaccination has been applied) for holdings that have already achieved this qualification.

The planned and achievable objective for 2019, was for other Italian provinces and regions to acquire (or retain) the requirements to qualify for the officially disease-free status (or disease-free status where vaccination is applied) as regards brucellosis in bovine and buffalo.

To give to the local veterinary services the instruments to speed up the process of eradication especially in those regions that are proceeding slowly, the Ministry of Health has renewed the Ministerial Ordinance 28 May 2015, in force until 26 of June 2020 (ANNEX 1). The Ordinance applied in the not OBF territories for the eradication as well as in the OBF territories for the surveillance of the disease, has the aim of improving in this way, a uniform control of the disease in all Italy. In the renew of the Ordinance has been regulated by apposite guide line, the correct execution of the epidemiological enquires for the control of the outbreaks, such as indicated by the specific Working Group on the epidemiological enquire held by the Ministry of Health.

The other measures included in the Ordinance are the following:

- 1) Responsibility of the Chief of local Veterinary service on the control of 100% of the herds;
- 2) Registration of pastures;
- 3) Controls of Dealers;
- 4) Control of fattening herds;
- 5) Controls on animals before and after movement;
- 6) Electronic identifications of animals of the outbreak (rumen bolus);
- 7) Electronic identifications of animals subjected to movement;
- 8) Capture and control of animals at pasture that have no owner or that have an owner that does not assure capture and the restraint of animals;
- 9) Guidelines for stamping-out;
- 10) Elaboration, already at the suspect, of the epidemiological investigations, following the guide lines (ANNEX 2) of the Ministry of health;
- 11) Compulsory use of the data base, SANAN and SIMAN;
- 12) Sanctions and withdrawal of the status of OTF of the herds in case of fraud;
- 13) Control of the efficacy and efficiency by local and regional veterinary service.

Brucella abortus has been eradicated from most part of the Italian territory. Out of 19 Regions and 2 Autonomous provinces, 13 of them and 3 Provinces of the Regions: Abruzzo, Molise and Puglia have been declared Officially *B. abortus* - Free according to EU legislation (ANNEX 3).

In the year 2019, the prevalence recorded for the disease in Italy, calculated on all the herds present in the national territory, has been 0,39%, the prevalence in all Italy calculated in the herds under program in 0,42%, while in the territories still not declared as O.B.F. (4 regions and: three provinces of the Region Abruzzo, 5 provinces of Region Puglia, 1 province of Region Molise and 1 province of Region Lazio) the prevalence recorded has been 1,25%, with an incidence of 1,08% (ANNEX 3).

This data are improving respect the 2018 (ANNEX 4 and 5) that where respectively 0,48% (national prevalence), 1,29%-1,07% (prevalence and incidence registered in the territories still not OBF).

The number of herds present in 2019 (88917) is increased respect the holdings present in 2018 (88784) while the number of outbreaks registered in the 2019 (361) is decreased respect the one registered in 2018 (388).

As the last year the higher prevalence in Italy is reported from Sicily region, with an overall prevalence of 2,36% herds infected on the controlled, and with the Province of Messina recording the highest value among all provinces, i.e. 7,76%. Infact of the 219 outbreaks registered in Sicily in 2019, 139 occurred in Messina.

Anyway is important to underline that if we consider the results of prevalence achieved by the Sicily Region in the last 5 year we note a decreasing of the outbreaks and prevalence from 2015 to 2019 (see ANNEX 9). Infact in 2015 the prevalence registered has been 3,26% and in 2019 2,36% and the number of outbreaks has been 312 in 2015 and 219 in 2019. Progress are going-on in Sicily, also if Sicily is the Region where, has been registered the highest prevalence of the territories OBrF. The situation is not the best and much more should be done, anyway is important to positively consider the progress done, to consolidate it and increment it in the next future, applying if necessary further strongly measure to arrive at the eradication of the disease.

Also the buffalo in Campania have registered an increasing of the prevalence in 2019 (8,56%) respect the one registered in 2018 (6,29%) - ANNEX 6 and 7.

Anyway no as positive, as in Sicily, the considerations that we may deduce, looking at the data of the last five years in buffalo population in Campania Region. Infact the prevalence registered in 2015 (2.89%) was much more lower of the one registered in 2019 (8,56%) (ANNEX 9). An increasing of almost 3 times bigger, that the Campania Region ascribe at problems of bio-security of the farms in some territories of the Province of Caserta. During the Working Table* on Campania Buffalo, held by the Ministry of Health in august 2019, the Region has explained that this farms are very close each other and that this contiguity is the main cause of the persistence of the disease. Other cause that contribute at the diffusion of the disease is the irregular movement of the animals and for this problem the Region has proposed a genetic plan for the certain identification of the animals.

To continue the supervision of the situation in Sicily as indicated by the report of the Audit performed by the DGSANTE in July 2017, the Ministry of Health the 20 August 2019 has inaugurated the "working table on bovine brucellosis in Sicily", which was attended by representatives of the: Veterinary Services of the Department of Health of the Sicily Region; IZS Sicily and the National Center of Reference for Brucellosis; Local Veterinary Authorities of Messina, Enna, Catania, Ragusa and Syracuse, representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, of the Breeders Associations of Coldiretti and of the Sicily Breeders Union, to discuss the current situation of bovine brucellosis in Sicily.

At the end of the works, the CVO concluded by entrusting the responsible of the veterinary services of the Sicily Region, to elaborate with the collaboration of the colleagues of the Local Veterinary Authorities involved, with the IZS Sicily and the National Reference Center for Brucellosis, a document in which list the difficulties encountered during the application of the brucellosis eradication plans in Sicily and the relative solutions that can be put in place to overcome the identified problems in a definitive way.

To deal with the situation of buffalo brucellosis in the Campania region, the Ministry of Health convened a

technical panel in August 2020 to check the problems relating to the aforementioned eradication plan. The technical table was attended by: the Region, the competent laboratories, the National Reference Center and the breeders' associations. After the table, a permanent working group was created to supervise the progress of the plan and find solutions to the problems identified.

To improve the supervision of the eradication plans the Ministry of Health has published on the national Veterinary informatics Sistem (VETINFO) a specific dashboard for the bovine brucellosis plan.

The DASHBOARD make possible at, Local, Regional and Central level the control and supervise the application of the eradication program.

1.2 Details on the level of achievement of the targets set in the approved programme and technical difficulties.

Analysis of the data received from the regions (ANNEX 4 and 5) concerning the eradication activities carried out between 2018 and 2019 has revealed the situation described below.

The bovine national holdings population subject to the program in the year 2019 is increased (88917), compared with the data of 2018 (88784).

The number of controlled holdings in the territories not OBF is decreased in 2019 (28773) respect to 2018 (30174). The number of positive herds is lower (361), than in 2018 (388). The number of outbreaks stamped-out (23) is the same than in 2018 (23).

The percentage of holdings controlled in 2019 is closer (99,55%), at the percentage of holdings controlled in 2018 (99,77%). The prevalence and incidence registered in 2019, in the territories not OBF, are lower (1,25%-1,08%) than the results obtained in 2018 (1,29%-1,07%).

We may say, that in the year 2019 has been registered a positive improving respect the 2018. This progress may be due at the application of the prorogation of the Ministerial Order applied for all the year 2019. In five of the 7 Regions still not OBF we have registered progress in the eradication programs (Abruzzo, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania and Puglia). In 4 of them have registered a prevalence under 0% (Abruzzo - 0,09%, Basilicata -0,86%, Calabria 0,39% and Campania 0,67%) in particular some Province of Puglia Region (Bari, Barletta-Andria-Trani, Taranto and Lecce) have achieved the condition foreseen by the Directive CEE 64/432 and for this reason have presented at the Commission a request of OBF, at the moment under evaluation. As negative point we signal the cluster of bovine brucellosis (13 outbreaks) registered in the Region Molise that have increased the prevalence from 0,2% of 2018 at 2,97% of 2019, the Province of Messina that has registered a prevalence of 7,76 %, 2 point more respect the prevalence registered in 2018 (5,73%), and the buffalo in Campania where the prevalence registered is increased from 6,29% in 2018 to 8,56% in 2019 and the incidence increased from 4,79% (2018) to 6,42% (2019).

Regarding the cluster of brucellosis in Molise Region, the epidemiological investigation has indicate as possible source of infection, herds coming from the Province of Foggia (Gargano Area) in Puglia Region. The first outbreaks started at pasture, in the city of Frosolone, with a case of abortion, then the bovine where soon identified controlled and slaughtered, From the abortion has been isolated the brucella abortus biovar 3, that has demonstrated genetically correspondence with the brucella isolated in province of Foggia. Of the 13 outbreaks registered in 2019, 9 of them are already closed by stamping out, the bovines finded positive in the still open outbreaks have been slaughtered with a average of 19 days. All the positive herds, are under controls by the local veterinary services with the supervision of the regional veterinary services and the collaboration of the Reference National Centre of Brucellosis.

The WORKING DOCUMENT SANTE/2017/10186 rev 1 Guidelines for the Union co-funded programmes of eradication, control and surveillance of animal diseases and zoonosis for the years 2018-2020, for bovine-buffalo brucellosis in the entire nation, has foreseen for the year 2020 a further reduction of 30% compared to the expected prevalence for the year 2018 (0,46), calculated on the baseline of the result registered in 2015 (0,66%). In 2019 the reduction expected should be the 15% of 0,46% that is = to 0,39.

The prevalence recorded for the disease in Italy in 2019 calculated on all the herds under control, has been 0,40%.

1.3 Epidemiological maps for infection and other relevant data on the disease/activities (information on serotypes involved,...) (Please attach files of data using the PDF attachment feature) Use the textbox below to provide clarifications for the maps you attach, if needed.

Four regions are not still OBF (Sicilia, Calabria, Basilicata, Campania). Four other regions, have Provinces that has been declared OBF :

Puglia - Province of Brindisi;

Molise - Province of Campobasso;

Abruzzo . Province of Pescara.

The trends of cattle brucellosis prevalence and incidence in non-OBF territories are clearly declining during the last five years (ANNEX 4) like also in all Italy. Are still present some area where are not registered the same progress like the buffalo in Campania Region, where is registered an increasing of the prevalence. See also ANNEX 8 (notification of abortion).

2. TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATION ON RUMINANT DISEASES PROGRAMMES

VERY IMPORTANT: Please fill out the following tables with figures corresponding to measures performed during the implementing period (1/1 to 31/12).

Table A - DATA ON HERDS

Region	Animal species	Total number of herds	Total number of herds under the programme	Number of herds to be checked under the programme this year	Number of herds checked	Number of positive herds	Number of new positive herds	Number of herds depopulated
		% of herds depopulated	% of herds coverage		% of positive herds Period herd prevalence		% of positive herds Herd incidence	
Molise	Cattle	787	471	471	471	14	13	1
		7.14 %	100 %		2.97 %		2.76 %	
Puglia	Cattle and Buffalo	3,505	3,244	3,244	3,244	45	35	6
		13.33 %	100 %		1.39 %		1.08 %	
Sicilia	Cattle	9,573	9,286	9,286	9,286	219	189	12
		5.48 %	100 %		2.36 %		2.04 %	
Abruzzo	Cattle	3,045	2,141	2,141	2,128	2	2	0
		0 %	99.39 %		0.09 %		0.09 %	
Basilicata	Cattle	2,558	2,326	2,326	2,326	20	20	0
		0 %	100 %		0.86 %		0.86 %	
Calabria	Cattle	6,806	5,299	5,299	5,184	20	19	0
		0 %	97.83 %		0.39 %		0.37 %	
Campania	Cattle	4,463	3,266	3,266	3,266	39	31	4
		10.26 %	100 %		1.19 %		0.95 %	
Campania	Buffalo	1,097	1,087	1,087	1,087	96	72	18
		18.75 %	100 %		8.83 %		6.62 %	
Total		31,834	27,120	27,120	26,992	455	381	41
		9.01 %	99.53 %		1.69 %		1.41 %	

Table B - DATA ON ANIMALS

Region	Animal species	Total number of animals	Number of animals under the programme	Number of animals to be tested under the programme this year	Number of animals tested	Number of animals tested individually	Number of positive animals	Number of animals with positive result slaughtered or culled	Number of animals slaughtered
			% coverage at animals level			% positive animals Animal Prevalence			
Abruzzo	Cattle	55,613	35,091	35,091	35,069	35,069	21	21	21
					99.94 %	0.06 %			
Basilicata	Cattle	106,088	73,695	73,695	73,695	73,695	90	90	90
					100 %	0.12 %			
Calabria	Cattle	129,081	89,750	89,750	89,302	89,302	137	136	136
					99.5 %	0.15 %			
Campania	Cattle	100,775	73,507	73,507	73,507	73,507	293	293	300
					100 %	0.4 %			
Molise	Cattle	18,047	11,284	11,284	11,284	11,284	84	84	140
					100 %	0.74 %			
Puglia	Cattle	189,193	137,729	137,729	137,729	137,729	227	222	316
					100 %	0.16 %			
Sicilia	Cattle	389,201	272,807	272,807	272,807	272,807	1,588	1,547	1,867
					100 %	0.58 %			
Campania	Buffalo	311,880	275,994	275,994	275,994	275,994	9,135	9,135	12,091
					100 %	3.31 %			
Total		1,299,878	969,857	969,857	969,387	969,387	11,575	11,528	14,961

Molise	Cattle	Rose Bengal test	23,424	23,424	97
Puglia	Cattle and Buffalo	Rose Bengal test	265,003	265,003	653
Sicilia	Cattle	Rose Bengal test	483,214	483,214	1,635
Campania	Buffalo	Rose Bengal test	567,882	567,882	9,886
Abruzzo	Cattle	Complement fixation test	0	300	22
Basilicata	Cattle	Complement fixation test	0	6,040	90
Calabria	Cattle	Complement fixation test	0	12,879	125
Campania	Cattle	Complement fixation test	0	13,850	170
Molise	Cattle	Complement fixation test	0	2,291	84
Puglia	Cattle and Buffalo	Complement fixation test	0	16,695	227
Sicilia	Cattle	Complement fixation test	0	96,106	1,406
Campania	Buffalo	Complement fixation test	0	118,573	9,121
Campania	Cattle	ELISA test	1	1	1
Basilicata	Cattle	Bacteriological test	59	59	2
Calabria	Cattle	Bacteriological test	324	324	2
Campania	Cattle	Bacteriological test	642	642	5
Molise	Cattle	Bacteriological test	62	62	2
Puglia	Cattle	Bacteriological test	166	166	12
Sicilia	Cattle	Bacteriological test	1,024	1,024	263
Campania	Buffalo	Bacteriological test	4,517	4,517	42
Campania	Buffalo	ELISA test	181	181	10
Basilicata	Cattle	PCR test	0	25	0
Molise	Cattle	PCR test	0	2	0
Puglia	Cattle and Buffalo	PCR test	0	28	0
Sicilia	Cattle	PCR test	0	99	41
Total			1,779,330	2,046,218	24,489
		Methods of laboratory analysis		Total number of tests	
		Total - Bacteriological test		6,794	
		Total - Complement fixation test		266,734	
		Total - ELISA test		182	
		Total - PCR test		154	
		Total - Rose Bengal test		1,772,354	

COMMENT / ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATION