Brussels, 30 March 2023

Summary of the meeting of the expert group on possible amendments to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 as regards a number of issues

E00930

on 30 March 2023

on-line meeting

1. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was as circulated prior to the meeting as part of the invitation.

2. Nature of the meeting

The meeting was non-public. The meeting was organised on-line where experts of the Expert Group 00930 on Animal Health attended via the WebEx platform. The Chair noted the absence of the European Parliament and the Council. Circulated draft: PLAN/2023/632.

3. List of points discussed

3.1. Introduction

The Commission recalled that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss possible amendments to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689.
To assist that, the relevant draft was circulated well in advance of the meeting.

3.2. Exchange of views as regards possible amendments to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 as regards rules for surveillance, eradication programmes, and disease-free status for certain listed and emerging diseases

3.2.1. Targeted animal population - Union Surveillance Programmes

The Commission explained the proposed regulatory changes that have as objective to supplement current surveillance rules to allow competent authorities to implement surveillance in animal species that are currently not included in the design of the surveillance programmes.

In the specific case of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in mammals, this amendment will further enable and support competent authorities to conduct structured surveillance for HPAI in mammals when they consider that the mammals constitute a risk for the animal or human health.

Some experts considered that:

- A harmonised approach as regards surveillance for HPAI in mammals should be provided, and/or technical assistance from the European Reference Laboratory (EURL) might be needed;
- Common measures should be laid down in case of detection of positive mammals.

The Commission replied that the intention is to provide a clear legal basis to implement HPAI surveillance in non-listed species, including mammals following European Food Safety Authority's recommendations. The draft amendment will not contain guidance as regards surveillance regimes or possible measures in case of positive cases

3.2.2. Pathways to gain disease-free status

The Commission explained that in the current text, in most of the situations, the prior approval of an eradication programme is needed before gaining the disease-free status.

The draft amendment has as objective to make it possible to gain disease-free status based on historical and surveillance data without limitations related to the disease or any time limit. Therefore, competent authorities will have the choice to apply for the disease-free status with or without a prior approved eradication programme.

Some experts consider that:

- In the case of disease of aquatic animals, without a prior eradication programme approved, the surveillance mandatory to demonstrate disease-freedom might not be performed.

The Commission explained and confirmed that the criteria to gain the free status are the same with or without having an approved eradication programme. Also, the Commission clarified that trade protection measures apply only to a country/zone/compartment which is subject to an approved/declared eradication programme.

3.2.3. Maintenance of status free from infection with NDV without vaccination

The Commission explained that the intention is to clarify the requirements for the maintenance of the status free from infection with NDV without vaccination following an outbreak of the disease.

5. Conclusions

The Commission concluded that the elements of this revision have been thoroughly discussed and confirmed that it took due note some of suggestions.

6. Next steps

The Commission encouraged the experts to send in their inputs by 12 April 2023. The Commission explained that expressed agreements are welcome, absence of inputs is assumed to be an agreement and encouraged the experts to share their reasoning too, in case of different views.

The Commission plans to progress with the draft towards internal consultations and subsequent steps leading to adoption and publication as soon as possible. No further expert group meetings are planned, unless necessary.

END