



Brussels, 10/07/2019

## **Minutes**

Meeting of the Animal Health Advisory Committee, the sub-group of the Advisory group on the food chain and animal and plant health held in Brussels on May 20th, 2019.

Approval of the agenda of 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of 2019 of the Animal Health Advisory Committee

## **Introduction, opening: Christian Juliusson, Policy Officer - Unit G3 Official controls and eradication of diseases in animals - DG SANTE**

The Commission explained briefly the purpose of the meeting and with no points raised under AOB, the Commission proceeded with the agenda.

### **1. Official Controls**

The Commission made a presentation as regards the state of play of the delegated and implementing acts under the Official Controls Regulation. Further to the presentation, while there were no comments or questions as regards the substance of the acts, several stakeholders (FVE and EFFAB) expressed their concerns regarding the public feedback mechanism, which they considered difficult to use since the relevant consultation is hard to find on the website, and asked to be better informed of upcoming consultations, for instance by e-mail. EFFAB also suggested that the Commission's Power Point presentations should be shared with stakeholders prior to the meetings in the future.

### **2. Animal disease outbreaks (SANTE G3)**

The Commission gave a presentation on the state of play regarding African swine fever, avian influenza, lumpy skin disease, peste des petits ruminants.

EPBA suggested that an update as regards bee related parasites and diseases should be provided by the Commission at the next Animal Health Advisory Committee meeting.

#### **African swine fever:**

An update was given on the African swine fever situation in Europe since the last Animal Health Advisory Committee meeting in December 2018. A map of the global situation was also presented to describe the fast spreading of the disease in China and in other countries in Asia. The participants welcomed the presentation and requested additional information on the strategy for the wild boar management. FESSASS raised the issue of communication between the Commission and the authorities in China on the issue of African swine fever; The Commission undertook to provide FESSASS with the relevant contact details of the Unit dealing with international relations with China.

**Avian influenza:** The situation as regards highly pathogenic avian influenza is characterised by a low number of outbreaks in poultry and captive birds since the last Animal Health Advisory Committee meeting in December 2018. All 6 outbreaks in Bulgaria since December 2018 were caused by the HPAI subtype H5N8.

There was one outbreak of LPAI H5 in captive birds in the Netherlands in December 2018 and one outbreak in Germany in April 2019.

Since January 2019 there have been 31 cases of H3 in Belgium with 6 of those confirmed as H3N1. No questions from the floor on avian influenza.

### **Lumpy skin disease & peste des petits ruminants:**

Following the presentation of the Commission on the update on lumpy skin disease and peste des petits ruminants, FESSASS took the floor:

- FESSASS requested information on DG SANTE funding of research on PPR /LSD diagnostics, through the relevant EU reference laboratories.  
The Commission replied that currently no major needs are identified in the diagnostic methods for these diseases. Technical support on the diagnosis of LSD and PPR is always available through the relevant EURLs, both for EU and non-EU countries. Financing of research, however, is not within the capacity of DG SANTE

### **3. Animal Welfare – Update on animal welfare issues (SANTE G2)**

The Commission presented an update on the animal welfare activities since the last meeting in December 2018 (see link to presentation below). Following the presentation several stakeholders took the floor:

- EFFA asked details regarding the Commission project on indicators.  
Regarding the project on indicators, the Commission replied that the industry could have a valuable input. Some sectors are collecting many data, which could be used as indicators to evaluate the state of play of the situation and monitor progress.
- FESASS asked how the control posts project could be promoted outside the EU so that the Court ruling on animal transport could be better complied with in third countries.  
Regarding animal transport, the Commission underlined that promotion of good practices in third countries directly depend on their interest in the matter. Furthermore, there is a risk that third countries close importation from live animals in case of bad transport conditions from the EU.
- FVE asked information regarding the follow up of the pilot project on best practices on to promote the market of meat from uncastrated pigs.  
Regarding the project on pigs, the Commission explained that in absence of acceptable offer last year, the project could not be completed. However, a negotiated procedure is presently ongoing to disseminate the good practices collected.

### **4. Animal Health Law**

The Commission gave an update on the state of play on all aspects of the delegated and implementing acts with regard to the Animal Health Law as follows:

- General overview
- Registration and approval of establishments, record keeping, animal identification and registration rules
- Movements of terrestrial animals and hatching eggs
- Overview on aquatic animals
- Overview on germinal products

Following the presentation on the general overview on the state of play the following issues were raised:

- EAZA pointed out that in some cases local authorities are not yet aware of the list of diseases.
- EFFAB asked if it would be possible for the Commission to circulate the final versions of delegated acts before they are sent to translation.
- FVE asked if the Commission can, as it did before, inform on the dates when the draft delegated acts will be available for the public feedback.

The Commission explained that during translation the drafts may still undergo changes. However, the Commission will check and see if the request of the stakeholders can be accommodated.

With regard to the presentation on the registration and approval of establishments, record keeping, animal identification and registration rules and rules for movements of terrestrial animals the following issues were raised:

- UECEBV expressed worries about the possible administrative burdens for operators conducting assembly operations, in particular those without establishments, and for transporters related to the registration obligation (i.e. registration number). They asked if some of those operators can be

excluded from this obligation. The Commission representatives explained registration process is a very simple one (no visit by the competent authority is necessary) and should not be burdensome for operators. Meanwhile the registration is essential to ensure traceability.

- UECEBV also thanked the Commission for the provided derogation regarding the identification of sheep intended for slaughter.
- Vier Pfoten asked for re-assurance that the Commission will not exempt establishments keeping dogs and cats from the registration obligation.

The Commission representatives confirmed that it has no intention to propose such an exemption. This was the Commissions commitment during the AHL negotiation and is spelled out in the recitals of the AHL.

- ATA was wondering should premises at airports where dogs and cats are temporarily kept be considered as establishments.
- FESASS pointed out that biosecurity rules for assembly operations are found both in the DA on registration and approval of establishments and traceability of animals and in DA on movements, and this makes the legislation difficult to read and understand.

The Commission representatives explained the reasons for this, which is an obligation to follow the empowerments as they are laid down in the basic act. There is one set of biosecurity requirements for approval of the establishments for assembly operations, and another set of biosecurity requirements for the operator who carries out the movement of animals.

- FESASS asked if it will be laid down any criteria for the Competent Authorities when they assess what is appropriate in relation to Annex I to DA on registration and approval of establishments and traceability of animals, where the term “appropriate” is used several times.

The Commission representatives explained that this competence is given to the Competent Authorities of the Member States.

- Vier Pfoten requested information about approval of animal shelters for dogs, cats and ferrets. They pointed out that in the DA on registration and approval of establishments and traceability of animals it is laid down rules for granting approval of assembly centres and animal shelters for dogs, cats and ferrets from which those animals can be moved to another Member State, and they would like to know if it will be rules for granting approval also for other animal shelters?

The Commission representatives replied that in the preparation of the delegated act it was made clear that no rules for this kind of activity should be established.

- FESASS expressed concerns about the rules for movements of bovines from Member States or zones not free and not having an approved eradication programme for BVD to zones with an approved eradication programme for that disease. This is a disease not listed in current legislation, and it might take some time for Member States to have an approved eradication programme in place, and in this time movement of animals can be problematic.

The Commission representatives explained that the rules for BVD follows the principle for category C diseases, and the aim is to protect zones under eradication from being re-infected by movement of potentially infected animals. The requirements for movements are the same as those laid down for recruiting animals to BVD-free establishments laid down in the DA on surveillance, eradication and free status. These rules are based on the eradication programmes already in force in some Member States, as it was agreed during the discussions in the Expert Groups.

Following the presentation on aquatic animals the following issues were raised:

- EFFAB asked if the proposed approach to regaining disease free status for HPR deleted-ISA in independent compartments could be reconsidered given the fact that broodstock are not present in these establishments all year round.

The Commission representatives responded that sentinel animals can be tested rather than the broodstock themselves.

- EFFAB also asked if germinal products of aquatic animals could be dealt with separately from the aquatic animals themselves, as is the case for terrestrial animals.

The Commission representatives explained that there is no provision for this in the AHL but if EFFAB wish to send details of why this is an important for them, their ideas will be reviewed.

- Euro Group for Animals asked if the delegated acts cover fish welfare.  
The Commission representatives responded that they cover only animal health provisions.

With regard to the presentation on germinal products, the Commission reported on the comments received in the context of the Better Regulation feedback mechanism during the period between 9 January and 6 February 2019 and explained the impact of those comments on the draft Delegated Regulation related to movements of germinal products. The following issue was raised by EAZA:

- EAZA asked if germinal products collected or produced at a confined establishment can be sent to a gene bank.  
The Commission representatives explained that the draft delegated regulation provides for the rules for a gene bank as a place of destination regardless of the place of origin of germinal products.

**All of the presentations may be found at the following link:**

**[https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/health/advisory\\_committees/presentations\\_en#20190520](https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/health/advisory_committees/presentations_en#20190520)**

**5. Any other business/next meeting**

No date as yet for the next meeting of the Advisory Committee. Members of the Advisory Committee will be informed as soon as possible on the proposed date for this meeting.

**6. List of participants**

<i>Stakeholder Organisation</i>
<b>AIPCE-CEP</b> <b>European Fish Processors &amp; Traders Association</b>
<b>ANIMALHEALTHEUROPE</b>
<b>ATA</b> <b>Animal Transportation Authority</b>
<b>AVEC</b> <b>Association of Poultry Processors and Poultry Trade in the EU</b>
<b>CEFIC</b> <b>European Chemical Industry Council</b>
<b>CLITRAVI</b> <b>Centre de liaison des industries transformatrices de viande de l'UE</b>
<b>COGECA</b> <b>European agri-cooperatives</b>
<b>DIAGNOSTICS FOR ANIMALS</b>
<b>EAZA</b> <b>European Association of Zoos and Aquaria</b>
<b>EDA</b> <b>European Dairy Association</b>
<b>EPBA</b> <b>European Professional Beekeepers Association</b>

<b>EFFAB</b> European Forum of Farm Animal Breeders
<b>EPO</b> European Pet Organisation <b>OFI</b> Ornamental Fish International
<b>Eurogroup for animals</b>
<b>FACE</b> Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU
<b>FEAP</b> Federation of European Aquaculture Producers
<b>FEFANA</b> Association of Specialty Feed Ingredients and their Mixtures
<b>FESASS</b> Fédération européenne pour la santé animale et la sécurité sanitaire
<b>FVE</b> Federation of Veterinarians of Europe
<b>IFHA</b> International Federation of Horseracing Authorities
<b>IFOAM EU Group</b> International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements EU Regional Group
<b>IPATA</b> International Pet and Animal Transportation Association
<b>OIE</b> World organisation for animal health
<b>SLOW FOOD</b>
<b>UECBV</b> European Livestock and Meat Trading Union
<b>VIER PFOTEN</b>

**Members of TROIKA – Austria and Finland**