

Summary

In the 2020 reporting year, Switzerland held disease-free status for 28 animal diseases. Switzerland documents disease status in three ways: historic disease-free status, i.e. the disease has never occurred; long-standing eradication; and/or disease-free status demonstrated by a national surveillance programme.

The national surveillance programmes in conjunction with reporting obligations, screening of suspected cases and abortions, screening in connection with meat inspections and other screening activities (e.g. animal movements) form the basis for monitoring and combating these animal diseases.

The national surveillance programme carried out in 2020 demonstrated disease-free status of the animal population for the following diseases: **infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR)**, **enzootic bovine leukosis (EBL)**, **porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS)**, **Aujeszky's disease (AD)** and **brucellosis of sheep and goats (BM)**.

The surveillance targets were met for **bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)**, **bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD)**, **avian influenza (AI)**, **Newcastle disease (ND)** and **Salmonella infection in poultry**.

The whole of Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein have been a restriction zone for **bluetongue (BTV) serotype 8 (BTV-8)** since autumn 2017. The national surveillance programme for BTV established the virus prevalence of bluetongue (serotype BTV-8). For all other BTV serotypes, such as BTV-1 or BTV-4, the national surveillance programme demonstrated freedom from BT in accordance with EU requirements at national and regional level. In 2020, BTV-8 was found in four virus-positive animals.

“Early detection Animal health” covers various activities and programmes that support or supplement official animal disease surveillance. In response to a potential or imminent risk of an infectious pathogen being introduced from another country, a specific early detection programme can be developed and implemented. The aim is to strengthen passive and active surveillance of a particular animal disease pathogen in Switzerland. Any entry of a pathogen into the Swiss animal population is to be identified as an index case if possible, to enable prompt measures to be taken to eradicate the disease or prevent it from spreading.

The following three early detection programmes were carried out in 2019 in cooperation with the cantons:

- National African swine fever (ASF) early detection programme in wild boar
- Regional tuberculosis early detection programme in red deer in eastern Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein
- National early detection programme for small hive beetle (Apinella)

All three programmes demonstrated that the animal diseases in question have not yet been introduced into Switzerland.

Diagnosis is an important basis for the surveillance and early detection of animal diseases. The laboratories approved for official diagnosis of animal diseases report all tests and results to the FSVO's laboratory database Alis.

In the reporting year, 399,093 animal disease investigations were carried out as part of officially ordered diagnosis and recorded in Alis; these entries related to 71 epizootics and three other diseases not covered by the regulations on epizootics (staphylococci, Schmallerberg, swine influenza). Compared to the previous year, this represents a decrease in animal disease investigations of 3% (2019 figure: 412,080).

The BVD screening accounts for over half of all animal disease investigations. Sixty percent of laboratory tests were carried out under the national surveillance programme. Laboratory tests to clarify cases of disease, abortion, sick animal slaughter or mortality accounted for 16% of all tests carried out.

The cantonal veterinary services use the ASAN application to report all cases of animal diseases to the information system for disease reports, the InfoSM. The total number of cases of animal diseases reported in 2020 (1,242 notifications) has fallen compared to 2019 (1,374 notifications). Although cases of bluetongue have fallen sharply and those of bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) have decreased slightly in number, cases of coxiellosis, listeriosis and paratuberculosis have increased. Cases of the frequently occurring European fowlbrood have fallen slightly. Cases of animal diseases for which Switzerland has disease-free status were seen for ND, IBR and PRRS. However, these cases have no influence on Switzerland's disease-free status as the two ND cases were of pigeons affected by a pigeon-specific variant of ND (see chapter 1.9), one IBR case was caused by a singleton reactor (see chapter 1.3) and the two PRRS cases were the result of an illegally imported pig (see chapter 1.6).

In 2020, there were 49,363 registered farms in Switzerland, 1.3% fewer than in 2019. The number of sheep farms also fell while the number of sheep kept was stable. In contrast, all types of poultry production increased.