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Report on Animal Disease Surveillance

Data for 2017

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Summary

Overall, more cases of highly contagious epizootic diseases to be eradicated and controlled were recorded in 2017 than in 2016.

In the 2017 reporting year, Switzerland held disease-free status for 25 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 surveillance programme.

The surveillance programmes carried out in 2017 demonstrated disease-free status of the animal population for the following diseases: **IBR, EBL, AD, PRRS, BTV-4, B. melitensis** and **CAE**. The surveillance targets were met for **BSE, LPAI, AI in wild birds** and **Salmonella infection in poultry**. In the case of **BVD**, outbreak investigations and surveillance conducted according to the “Concept for the BVD surveillance programme as from 2016” were stepped up, leading to the detection of more PI animals. The surveillance programme for **BTV-8** yielded two positive results in two animals. As a result, a BTV-8 restriction zone was imposed for the whole of Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein. Under the Newcastle Disease surveillance programme, **ND** was diagnosed serologically in a flock of broiler turkeys and clinically in a flock of laying hens.

The surveillance programmes in conjunction with reporting obligations form the basis for combating these animal diseases.

In 2017, FSVO-recognised laboratories recorded over 356,000 animal disease investigations in the Alis laboratory information system; these entries related to 70 epizootics and three other animal diseases. The coverage of testing was 20% higher than in 2016. This increase can be explained by the stepping up of the BVD surveillance programme. Fifty-five percent of laboratory tests were carried out under the national surveillance programmes. Laboratory tests to clarify cases of disease, abortion, sick animal slaughter or mortality accounted for only 16% of all tests carried out.

The number of reported cases of animal diseases has risen slightly compared to 2016. In particular, more cases of bovine virus diarrhoea (BVD), infectious laryngotracheitis (ILT) and paratuberculosis were recorded. There were fewer cases of avian influenza in wild birds.

The ILT cases occurred in small holdings operated as a hobby. Poultry exhibitions are a major risk factor in the spread of this animal disease. For paratuberculosis, new control measures were incorporated into Swiss animal disease legislation in December 2015, leading to an increase in diagnostic activity and a larger number of cases. The Europe-wide outbreak of avian influenza HPAI H5N8 affecting wild birds and poultry since autumn 2016 led to cases in wild birds in Switzerland in early January 2017. A few more cases of wild birds infected with HPAI H5N8 were found in the summer. A different HPAI virus strain (H5N6) occurred in December 2017. No commercial poultry populations in Switzerland were affected.

Numbers of cattle, pigs, sheep and horses continued to decline in 2017. Goat and poultry populations have increased.