

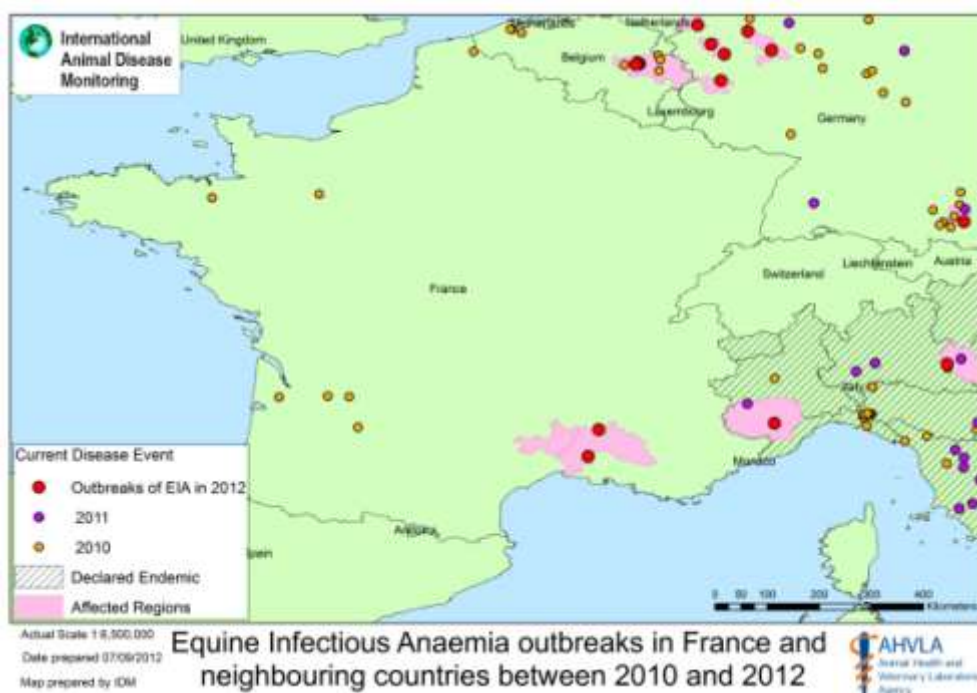
Equine Infectious Anaemia in Western Europe

Updated Outbreak Assessment No. 2

Note: Defra's International Disease Monitoring (IDM) monitors outbreaks of high impact diseases around the world. Equine Infectious Anaemia (EIA) is among those diseases of major concern.

1. Disease Report

France has reported an outbreak of EIA in a Camargue horse from the Gard region (OIE, 2012; pers.comm. French Ministry of Agriculture). The horse showed clinical signs and was euthanized on August 30th. The French Authorities are identifying tracings and are looking at possible sources of disease. Nothing has been reported as traced to the UK from France, but more information may be forthcoming in the future. Part of the investigation work is looking at a suspected epidemiological contact with the previous case in the Vaucluse region, reported in February 2012.



2. Situation Assessment

In January 2012, the French Authorities published a report on the surveillance for EIA in 2010 following several outbreaks associated with Romanian imports and French horses (Ministry of Agriculture, 2012). Nearly 15,000 tests were conducted as part of an active surveillance system in 2010. Of these, 10 equines from 7 premises tested positive, five were Romanian origin horses and five were French origin. Of the five horses of French origin, all were present in the same breeding and training

centre and it is believed were infected there, possibly by iatrogenic means. No further outbreaks were identified as a result of these cases.

The reported concluded that there could be a very low prevalence of EIA in France in certain horse sectors which is undetected because of the subclinical nature of the disease. Evidence collected from the 2010 cases suggests that iatrogenic transmission is more important than vector transmission when horses are sub-clinically infected. The only effective preventive measure (as there is no vaccine or treatment) is to rely on voluntary testing of horses, particularly for trade purposes and the vigilance of horse owners. As in the UK, in France there is considerable variation in horse movements, horse values and types of horse ownership, from high value competition horses, to horses raised for meat and the pet or hobby horse sector and therefore there are differences in husbandry standards and regulatory requirements, which creates management difficulties for disease control.

Trade between France and the UK, and Ireland, is covered not only by existing EU legislation, but also by a derogation under the Tripartite Agreement on requirements for inspection and certification. Under this agreement, horses may move between the three signatory countries freely, if accompanied by a passport and are not destined for slaughter, as long as the disease status of signatory countries remains the same. The movement does not have to be entered in the EU trade notification system (TRACES), nor be accompanied by a health certificate nor be subject to a vet inspection before travelling.

3. Conclusions

Again, we reiterate that given the recent cases being reported across Europe and the current vector season, we consider there is a low risk of incursion of EIA from any affected country through the movement of horses and all horse keepers are reminded of the requirement to report suspect clinical signs to their veterinarian.

We will continue to monitor the situation and report on further developments as well as any tracing work.

4. Authors

Dr Helen Roberts

5. References

Ministry of Agriculture (2012) Epidemiology Bulletin, Special Contagious Diseases – 2010. November 2011/number46:pp54-6.http://agriculture.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/BEP-mg-BE46EN_cle852a9f.pdf Accessed 07/09/2012.

OIE (2012) Equine Infectious Anaemia in France. Follow-up Report No. 1 Ref OIE 12252; Report Date 07/09/2012.
http://www.oie.int/wahis_2/temp/reports/en_fup_0000012252_20120907_131331.pdf Accessed 07/09/2012.