CHAPTER 8.3.

INFECTION WITH BLUETONGUE VIRUS

Article 8.3.1.

General provisions

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Article 8.3.14.

Introduction to surveillance

Articles 8.3.14. to 8.3.17. define the principles and provide guidance on surveillance for infection with BTV, complementary to Chapter 1.4. and for vectors complementary to Chapter 1.5.

Bluetongue is a vector-borne infection transmitted by different several species of Culicoides in a range of ecosystems.

Rationale: the suggested change in wording helps to emphasize that there are many species that act as vectors of the virus.

The purpose of surveillance is the detection of BTV transmission of BTV in a country or zone and not determination of the status of an individual animal or herds. Surveillance deals with the evidence of infection with BTV in the presence or absence of clinical signs.

An important component of the epidemiology of bluetongue is the capacity of its vector, which provides a measure of disease risk that incorporates vector competence, abundance, biting rates, survival rates and extrinsic incubation period. However, methods and tools for measuring some of these vector factors remain to be developed, particularly in a field context. Therefore, surveillance for bluetongue should focus on transmission of BTV in domestic ruminants and camels.

The impact and epidemiology of bluetongue widely differ in different regions of the world and therefore it is not appropriate to provide specific recommendations for all situations. Member Countries should provide scientific data that explain the epidemiology of bluetongue in the country or zone concerned and adapt the surveillance strategies for defining their status to the local conditions. There is considerable latitude available to Member Countries to justify their status at an acceptable level of confidence.

Surveillance for bluetongue should be in the form of a continuing programme.

Article 8.3.15.

General conditions and methods for surveillance

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