

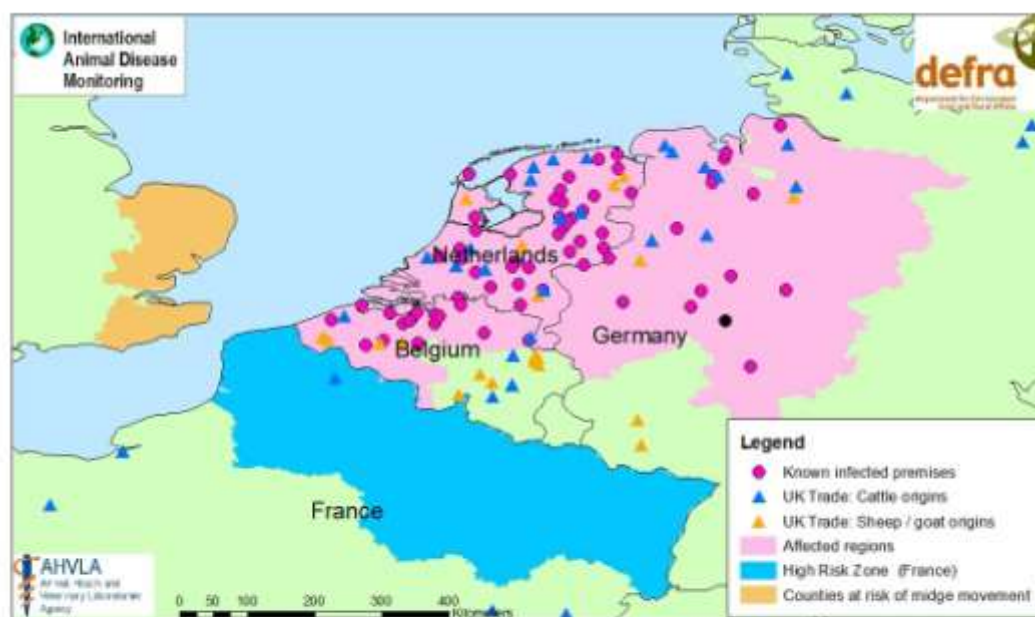
Update No.2 on Schmallenberg Virus in Northern Europe

Situation Assessment

Note: Defra's International Disease Monitoring (IDM) team monitors outbreaks of high impact diseases around the world. The emergence of new vector borne diseases of ruminants is monitored and reported when necessary.

1 Disease Report

Since our previous report on the 5th January (<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animal-diseases/files/poa-schmallenburg-update-120105.pdf>) we are continuing our updates on the ever changing disease situation for Schmallenberg virus (SBV) in northern Europe.



Current countries affected by reports of Schmallenberg virus, confirmed outbreaks and consignments of live ruminants to the UK (since July 2011) and areas at risk of midge incursion map prepared by IDM

Disease is still only being confirmed on the basis of a PCR test for viral RNA. The serological test is in development at the Friedrich Loeffler Institute (FLI). Once available it will provide information about current and past infection as well as exposure in humans.

Belgium has reported finding virus-positive lambs with congenital deformities on 27 sheep farms in the several regions, while a further 55 cattle, 42 more sheep and 2 goat farms have reported deformities (Belgium AFSCA, 2012).

In Netherlands there have now been over 240 farms reporting deformed lambs, calves and kid goats. Of these, 64 of the 129 sheep farms and 2 of the 11 goat farms are positive for virus in offspring but none of the 101 cattle farms (Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, 2012).

In Germany, there are now three regions with affected premises: North Rhine Westphalia, Hessen and North Saxony in 6 cattle farms (one confirmed in a still born calf, the others were neonate deformities matched to virus positive adult cattle) and 16 sheep farms (Friedrich Loeffler Institute, 2012).

The map above shows the geographic distribution of currently affected regions in Netherlands (all 12 provinces), Belgium and Germany. The areas of risk from midge movements from the Belgium and Netherlands coasts during this period are indicated for South East England, according to Met Office modelling of wind direction and conditions during the risk period.

The high risk zones in France remain in place (Alsace, Lorraine, Nor Pas de Calais, Picardie, Champagne Ardennes) (France Ministry of Agriculture, 2012) but there have been no reports of infection.

2 Situation Assessment

The Friedrich Loeffler Institute has reported that it will make available all protocols and virus material for other Member States to use in an effort to advance our knowledge of this new disease, in a true sense of international cooperation; they are to be highly commended for this action.

At present, the true extent of Schmallenberg disease around Europe is not known. Indeed the extent and impact of the infection cannot be estimated at present without more information about immunity of past infection and over-wintering of the disease in either vectors or infected animals.

We would like to remind keepers of ruminants to be aware of lambs, calves or kids born between now and late summer and report any abortions and deformities. Exotic ruminants, such as camelids, should also be kept under observation.

This is not a notifiable disease. Trade restrictions are not in place nor are there any control measures for infected farms. This may change based on forthcoming information over the coming weeks, but at present it is not anticipated.

In newborn, stillborn or aborted ruminants suspect cases are considered to be cases of limb and brain defects (such as arthrogryposis [locked joints], shortening of the

hamstrings, deformation of the jaw, hydranecephaly, stiff neck) or newborns with neurological disorders, flaccid paralysis, blindness, exaggerated movements, hyperexcitability, feeding difficulties and ataxia.

3 Conclusions

The current geographical distribution of Schmallenberg disease is difficult to quantify without a serology test to look at past infection and until the full epidemiological characteristics of the disease are known. There are still uncertainties around the zoonotic potential although the likelihood is believed to very low. As mentioned previously, given past midge incursions, the level of trade with affected regions and current distribution of disease in north Europe, there is a possibility disease will be found in the UK.

Animal keepers are requested to be vigilant and inform their veterinary surgeons of any such cases. Stillbirths, malformations or nervous disease in newborn animals or foetuses born to imported animals should be sent for screening to the AHVLA.

We will continue to monitor the situation.

4 Authors

Dr Helen Roberts

5 References

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All Commission Legislation is available from the Commission website http://eur-lex.europa.eu/RECH_mot.do .

