

Updated Situation Assessment No.11

Bluetongue virus (BTV-8) in France

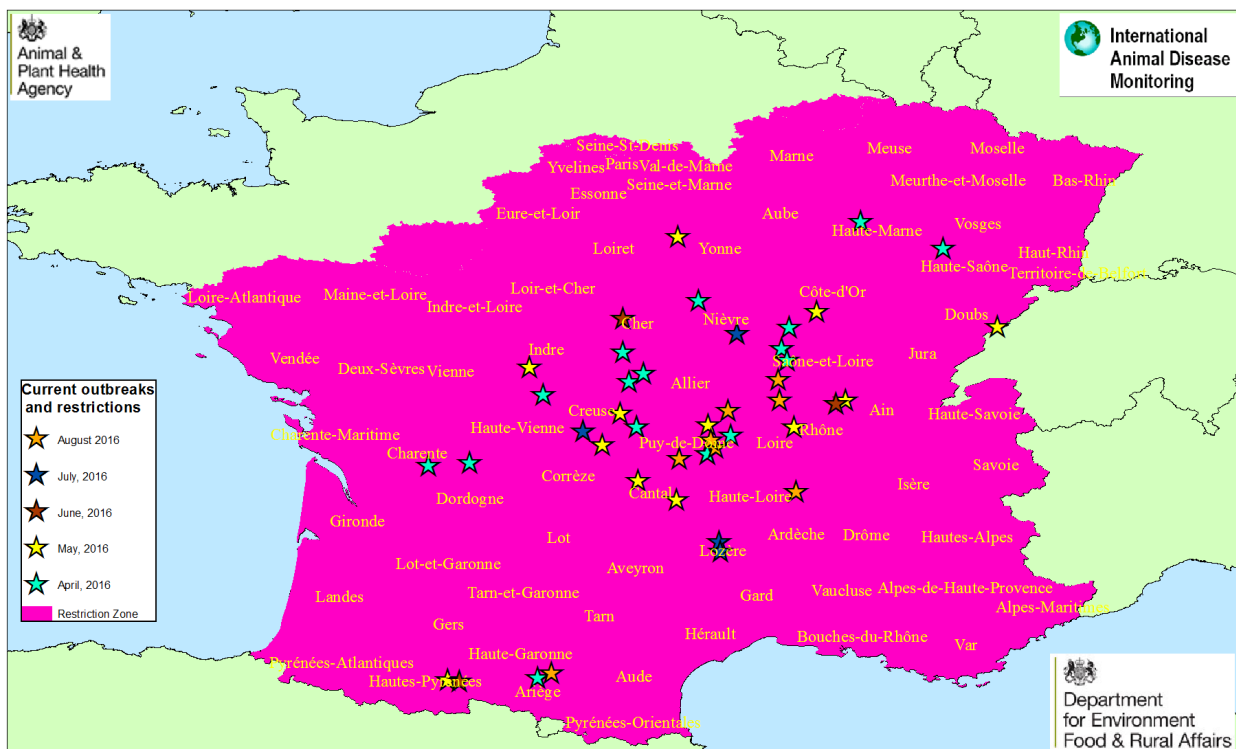
2nd September 2016

Ref: VITT/1200 BTV-8 in France

Disease Report

France has reported eight new outbreaks (since our last update on the 21st July) in the départements of Allier, Ariège, Haute-Loire, Puy de Dome and Saone et Loire regions, making a total of 297 outbreaks (OIE, 2016; see orange stars on the map below). All of the cases were detected as part of active surveillance, and all were in cattle where just one or two animals tested positive out of a sample size of 60 per farm. The animals were tested using PCR, which detects viral RNA rather than antibodies and suggest virus continues to circulate.

The extent of the restriction zones have not changed as a result of these cases and have been the same since April 2016.



Map Prepared by IDM
 Absolute Scale 1:5,400,000

BTV-8 in France: outbreaks detected since April 2016 and current Restriction Zones* by date of map

Date prepared 31/08/2016

0 30 60 120 180 240 Km

* restriction zones are available on the French Min of Ag website
<http://agriculture.gouv.fr/liste-des-departements-et-des-communes-classes-en-zone-reglementee-fo>

Situation Assessment

The French Authorities have not commented recently on these additional cases, however information available on their website (French Ministry of Agriculture, 2016) suggests that there is passive surveillance taking place in the restriction zone (clinical report cases for suspicion of disease) and active surveillance in sentinel herds in the free areas (which are along the north coast). However there are no data available at present in terms of what the sentinel surveillance has found as all the new cases are within the restriction zone.

Our risk assessment in February (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/qualitative-risk-assessment-bluetongue-virus-btv-8-entry-into-the-uk>) suggested that the risk of disease incursion to the UK would be highest in September and at present we have no reason to change this assessment until we understand more about the sentinel surveillance in Northern France. The size of any outbreak in UK would depend on the immune status of the livestock in the area around the first case or where infected midges are blown in. As discussed in our last update, bulk milk testing of a limited number of herds in the South and South East of England showed a high proportion of positive herds. However, follow-up of a proportion of these herds showed this positive status was only reflected in a small proportion of the animals present in the herd which had previously been vaccinated and therefore should not be taken as herd level protection. Vaccination of the whole herd is the only means to successfully prevent an outbreak. Partial herd immunity (when only a proportion of herds in a region are protected) may only serve to reduce the size of the outbreak.

Conclusion

Our risk level remains the same as our previous report, at medium, for this time of year. We have not increased the risk level to high as there are no reports of disease from either Northern France or other countries in NW Europe. There is still some uncertainty around the intensity of circulating virus in France, but it has not caused significant clinical disease in regions where the pathogen is present.

We will continue to monitor the current situation in France and report any further updates from the French Authorities.

BTV-8 vaccine has been available for the GB market since mid-July, and the decision to vaccinate should be taken by the farmer, in consultation with their private veterinary surgeon.

For information on bluetongue and the vaccine availability in GB, see the announcement by the NFU at www.nfuonline.com/bluetongue

**Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Animal and Plant Health Agency
Veterinary & Science Policy Advice Team - International Disease Monitoring**

Authors

Dr Helen Roberts

References

French Ministry of Agriculture (2016) Questions – Réponses sur les cas de fièvre catarrhale ovine détectés en 2015 [31/08/2016]. <http://agriculture.gouv.fr/questions-reponses-sur-les-cas-de-fievre-catarrhale-ovine-detectes-en-2015>

OIE (2016) Follow-up Report No. 41.

http://www.oie.int/wahis_2/public/wahid.php/Reviewreport/Review?page_refer=MapFullEventReport&reportid=20860



© Crown copyright 2016

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v.2. To view this licence visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/2/ or email PSI@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/animal-diseases-international-monitoring>

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at iadm@apha.gsi.gov.uk