Updated Situation Assessment No.16

# Bluetongue virus (BTV-8) in France

7 February 2017

Ref: VITT/1200 BTV-8 in France

### **Disease Report**

France has reported one hundred and fifty four (154) new outbreaks in January 2017 and 406 in December 2016, (all told, 550 since our last update on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2016) in the Départements within the current restriction zone (OIE, 2017; see orange stars on the map below). All the cases were in cattle where in most herds, only 1-3 animals tested positive out of the total herd (variable numbers, but presumed only 60 were tested, as per epidemiological principles); however in 39 instances over 5% within-herd prevalence was observed. No clinical cases were reported



The restriction zone now touches the North Coast of France, close to the Channel Islands, Nevertheless, the nearest case is still a considerable distance from the GB mainland.

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

### **Situation Assessment**

The table below shows the increase in testing for BTV-8 in France over 2016 and January 2017. It is most likely that the infected herds are being detected as a result of the wide surveillance for pre-movement testing which was taking place in November. The map above shows that the epicentre of the epizootic remains in the Central regions of France.



No further MET office modelling has been carried out since November due to the reduced temperatures. These low temperatures and current wind direction mean the movement of midges from France to the UK remains very unlikely. The low temperatures will continue to slow down the virus replication rate (the extrinsic incubation period) such that virus transmission remains unlikely.

## Conclusion

Our risk level remains at **LOW** to reflect the cold weather, wind direction and low likelihood of virus circulation in local midge populations in the UK.

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 <u>www.nfuonline.com/bluetongue</u>

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# Author

The International Disease Monitoring team

# References

OIE (2016) Follow-up Report No. 48-51. http://www.oie.int/wahis\_2/public/wahid.php/Diseaseinformation/WI



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