

Updated outbreak assessment #4

Lumpy skin disease (LSD) in Europe

26 September 2025

Disease report

On 18 September 2025, an outbreak of LSD was reported for the first time in the department of Rhône in France. This outbreak is outside of the current restriction zone and approximately 100km away from the closet outbreak in Ain department. Elsewhere in France, only one further outbreak has been reported in Ain.

Outbreaks also continue in Sardinia, Italy, with 11 reported since our last update (World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)).

Our previous outbreak assessment of the situation can be found at: [Lumpy skin disease in Europe - GOV.UK](#).

The risk of incursion into the UK is maintained at **low (rare but can occur)**.

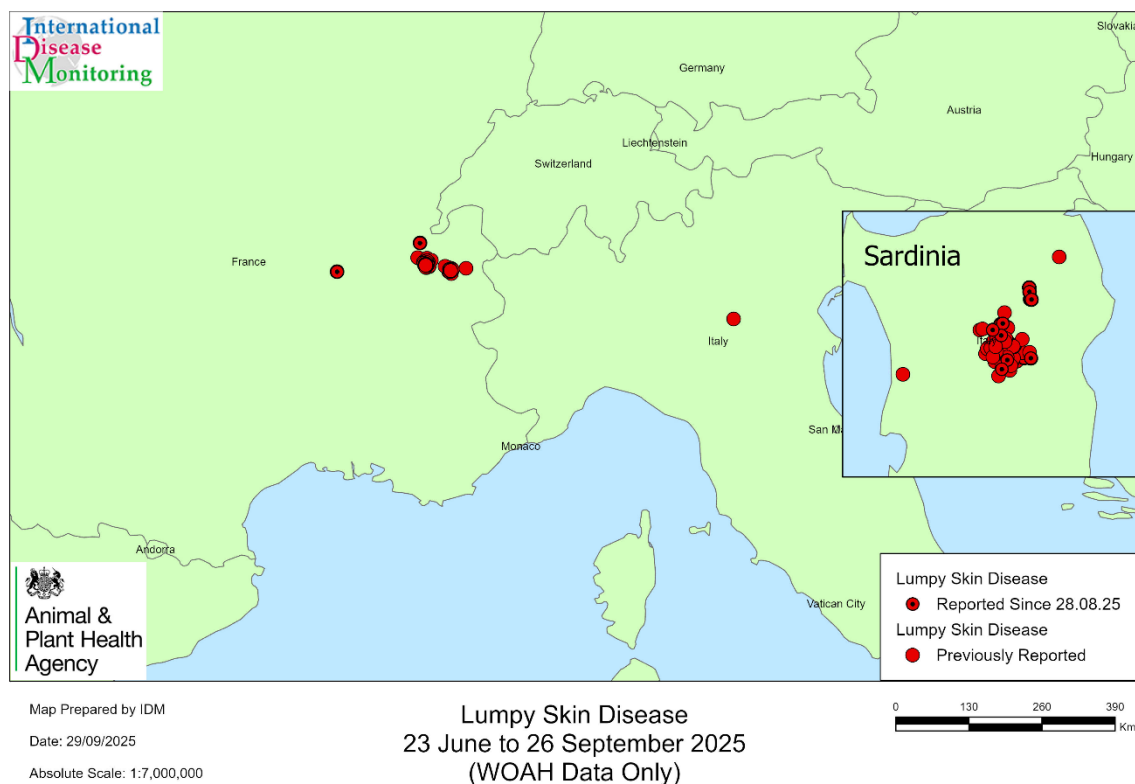


Figure 1: Reports of lumpy skin disease in Italy and France.

The map in figure 1 shows outbreaks of LSD reported to WOA from 23 June to 26 September. Outbreaks have been reported on the island of Sardinia and also in France, close to the border with Switzerland. There has also been one in northern Italy, Lombardy. Outbreaks that have occurred since our last update on 28 August contain a dot in the circle. These outbreaks are in mainland France and Sardinia.

Situation assessment

The initial reports in Europe in July have been the first in Europe since 2018 (according to WOA reports). There has been spread of the disease in North Africa since July 2024, in Algeria and Tunisia. Find our preliminary outbreak assessments for other regions: [Lumpy skin disease in North Africa and East Asia - GOV.UK](#)

Phylogenetic analysis on samples from France and Italy has demonstrated that:

- the causative agent for LSD in both of these outbreaks is genetically very closely related
- the outbreaks are also closely related to the 2018 Nigeria strain ([EU Reference Laboratory](#))

However, due to a lack of genomic data from North African outbreaks (such as Libya, Algeria and Tunisia), it is difficult to fully understand the virus spread and evolution.

LSD is a pox virus mainly affecting cattle and water buffalo, which is notifiable to the WOAH (Eom, Lee and Yoo, 2023). The virus is mainly transmitted by mechanical transmission by biting insect vectors.

The mortality rate is relatively low (typically 1 to 5%) (WOAH) but may reach between 20 to 85% in naïve and young animals (Ochwo, VanderWaal, Munsey, et al., 2018). Infection decreases milk production, causes weight loss, infertility, damages the hides (WOAH, 2025) and affects export trade.

LSD is endemic within most African countries, with Morocco now being the only country where cases have not been reported (Eom, Lee and Yoo, 2023). In many countries in Africa the true prevalence of LSD is unknown or yet to be studied (Abewaw, 2024).

From 2012, LSD spread through the Middle East, part of south-east Europe, the Balkans, Caucasus, Russia and Kazakhstan (WOAH, 2022). According to WOAH reports, the last reported cases in the Middle East and the Balkans were from 2019, while Russia continued reporting cases through March 2024. Türkiye reported outbreaks through 2023 ([Animal Disease Information System \(ADIS\)](#)).

Since 2019, it has also been reported in southeast Asia, including Taiwan, China, India, Bangladesh, Nepal Bhutan, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea and Thailand (Eom, Lee and Yoo, 2023) (and WAHIS data).

There has not been a case of LSD reported within the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). Lumpy skin disease is difficult to control and eradicate by stamping out of livestock alone and often requires vaccination to eradicate the disease from the national herd.

France

Since our last update, 2 outbreaks have been reported in France, bringing the total number of outbreaks to 79. Of these, one occurred on a farm housing unvaccinated cattle in Ain, and the other in Rhône.

This is the first outbreak in Rhône, and was reported on 18 September 2025 ([Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty](#)). The outbreak is approximately 100km away from the closest outbreak in Ain and outside of the current restriction zone. A new zone has been implemented around the new outbreak. A mandatory vaccination

campaign was launched on 20 September, with both the departments of Loire and Rhône in the zone, [containing 300,000 and 80,000 cattle, respectively](#).

From recent PAFF presentations, France has implemented several disease control measures, such as:

- changes to culling policies
- movement restrictions in the protection and surveillance zones
- emergency vaccination

As of 17 September, 90% of cattle within the restriction zone in Savoie were vaccinated. Vaccination in Corsica is still ongoing with the vaccination rate currently at 75%.

The European Veterinary Emergency Team (EUVET) have also undertaken a mission to assess current biosecurity measures. They noted that the French competent authorities implemented legislative measures in a timely and transparent manner, with stakeholders made aware quickly. A disease control centre was set up on 3 July and led by the Prefect of Savoie.

The EUVET team acknowledged that:

- early genome sequencing and genome sharing of the virus would have led to a better understanding of its epidemiology
- the administrative workload was challenging for tracing animal movements and active surveillance

The team has produced several recommendations, including to take into account the long incubation period and the risk of sub-clinical disease when deciding on parameters of restriction zones. On a member state level, they suggested that:

- LSD is included in contingency planning training moving forwards
- the method of culling is reconsidered in line with EU animal welfare rules to improve efficiency

Italy

Since our last report on 28 August, Italy has confirmed 11 additional outbreaks of LSD in Sardinia ([National Veterinary Epidemiological Bulletin \(BENV\)](#)). This brings the total number of outbreaks recorded to 65. The most recent outbreaks are clustered in the same communes where outbreaks were initially recorded. However, as mentioned in our previous updates, there has been spread to the Padru commune and the Cuglieri commune earlier in the year.

There has been no change in the surveillance or protection zones on the island (ruminantia.it).

From [media reports](#), Italy has undertaken mandatory vaccination in the Aosta Valley, northern mainland Italy, close to the border with France. Vaccines arrived from South Africa through Milan Malpensa airport and were administered rapidly under a mandatory vaccination programme to prevent the spread into northern Italy from France. The vaccination campaign has since concluded and vaccinated animals can be moved within the region after 28 days and outside of the region after 60.

Farmers that refused to vaccinate are subject to a [movement ban](#) and have to comply with additional biosecurity requirements and additional health checks.

Italy has provided an update on their epidemiological situation through PAFF presentations. There have been further suspicions across Lombardy and mainland Italy, however, these have yielded negative results. Italy is undertaking active surveillance, with 6,367 establishments visited as of 17 September across the country. Italy is also conducting vector surveillance, with LSD being detected in Sardinia in certain ticks and Diptera (flies). The restriction zone in place in Lombardy was revoked on 11 August due to the absence of further outbreaks. Vaccination began in Sardinia on 23 July, with now 71.85% of establishments vaccinated, with further doses scheduled to be administered. In the Aosta Valley, mainland Italy, the vaccination campaign was concluded on 5 September, reaching 97.62% of establishments in the region.

On 21 July, WAHIS reported that genotyping showed the virus circulating in Italy is closely related to cluster 1.2, which includes strains isolated in Nigeria and South Africa. Clinical surveillance is ongoing in the region ([WAHIS event 6568](#)). The source of the incursion is yet to be confirmed.

Switzerland

Due to outbreaks in France, which are of close proximity to the border with Switzerland, vaccination surveillance zones were implemented in:

- the canton of Geneva
- the neighbouring Terre Sainte region
- the canton of Vaud
- parts of the canton of Valais

All cattle, buffalo and bison have been vaccinated in these zones and vaccination is prohibited outside of the zone

The [Swiss Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office published guidelines](#) for the prevention of LSD, with a focus on vector control and management. At a farm level, they have advised the use of insect traps, insect-proof nets and insecticide-treated fabrics at barn openings. Approved insecticides are recommended where insects tend to settle such as near troughs, door and window openings and where the animals rest. A high level of hygiene should be maintained to eliminate the possibility of breeding sites.

For animal protection, Switzerland has suggested:

- the use of ear tags with insecticide
- treating animals with repellents
- avoiding having animals outdoors during peak vector hours
- if possible, the use of fly sheets

It is noted that some vectors are active throughout the day and night, making it difficult to limit outdoor exposure. There are also some protection measures for transport, including:

- treating animals with insect repellent before and after transport
- scheduling transport during low vector activity (for example, early morning)
- using buffer zones before entering the vehicle
- ensuring the vehicle has been cleaned, disinfected and undergone insect control, along with being equipped with insect traps

Switzerland has not reported any outbreaks of LSD so far.

Impact for Great Britain

Incursion of LSD into Great Britain could occur either by:

- importing infected live cattle
- mosquitos or biting flies carrying the virus entering the country and infecting animals present in the area

No live cattle imports have been identified from either country. As Italy has lost its LSD-free status, the UK has suspended the import of several bovine commodities since 25 June 2025, including:

- live animals
- germplasm
- raw milk and raw milk products
- offal

- hides and skin (unless treated)
- animal by products (unless undergoing specific heat treatment)

More details can be found on [25 June 2025: outbreak of lumpy skin disease in Italy](#).

Similar restrictions were brought in for France on 1 July after they lost their LSD-free status. Details can be found on [1 July 2025: Outbreak of lumpy skin disease in France](#).

Additionally, from 12 April 2025 it has been illegal for travellers to bring the following products from EU countries into Great Britain for personal use (personal imports):

- cattle, sheep, goat and pig meat
- dairy products

This is due to the outbreaks of foot and mouth disease in Europe earlier in the year. The ban is set out in the press release: [Government extends ban on personal meat imports to protect farmers from foot and mouth](#) news article

There are very limited exemptions to this, as outlined in the [Bringing food into Great Britain guidance](#) on GOV.UK. Live animals, germinal products and untreated wool, hair, skins and hides are not permitted for personal import under separate rules.

Biting flies carrying LSD into the UK is another potential route of incursion. Midges from the continent are capable of crossing the Channel and introducing LSD virus into the UK. Stable flies, a primary vector for LSD, are capable of being blown distances greater than 13km (Showler 2015). The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) estimates LSD can spread about 2km a day, given the vector-borne nature of the disease (EFSA 2017). The location of the current outbreaks is too far away for flies to reach UK borders from natural dispersal.

There is the possibility of flies being carried on vehicles from Italy or France, but the risk of this is difficult to estimate.

Given the continued presence of LSD in Sardinia and the limited spread of outbreaks in France, the risk of incursion to Great Britain is maintained at low (rare but can occur).

Conclusion

LSD has continued to spread in Sardinia and France, although at lower levels than previously reported, with a total of 144 outbreaks reported from both countries (WOAH).

The 100km jump of LSD in France emphasises the need for increased vigilance and early detection. The incursion of LSD into Italy follows spread in recent years in the North Africa region. Phylogenetic analysis has concluded that the outbreaks in France and Italy are of the clade 1.2 strain. This is the same clade that was circulating in Europe between 2015 and 2017.

Current vaccines that are being used in the EU are expected to provide protection against the virus. The strains in France and Italy have a 99.9% similarity, suggesting that the virus originated from a single introduction, and are closely related to a strain detected in Nigeria in 2018. However, the origin and route of introduction still remains unknown.

Since the 1 June 2024, there has been no trade in live bovine animals or bovine germplasm collected in Italy or France. Restrictions are being placed on specific bovine products from Italy and France in light of the LSD outbreaks mentioned above. The lifting or maintaining of restrictions are under constant review depending on information that we receive about the outbreaks.

Biting flies are capable of transmitting the disease, although the location of the outbreaks makes this risk pathway into Great Britain less likely.

The current risk level of incursion of LSD is maintained as low (rare but can occur), considering:

- the ongoing outbreaks and circulation of LSD in these areas
- uncertainty in the source of incursion
- the slight spread

This reflects the continued occurrence of outbreaks in these areas, which is mitigated by the restricted trade in cattle and bovine germplasm from these countries.

We will continue to monitor the situation.

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