

Updated Outbreak Assessment #2

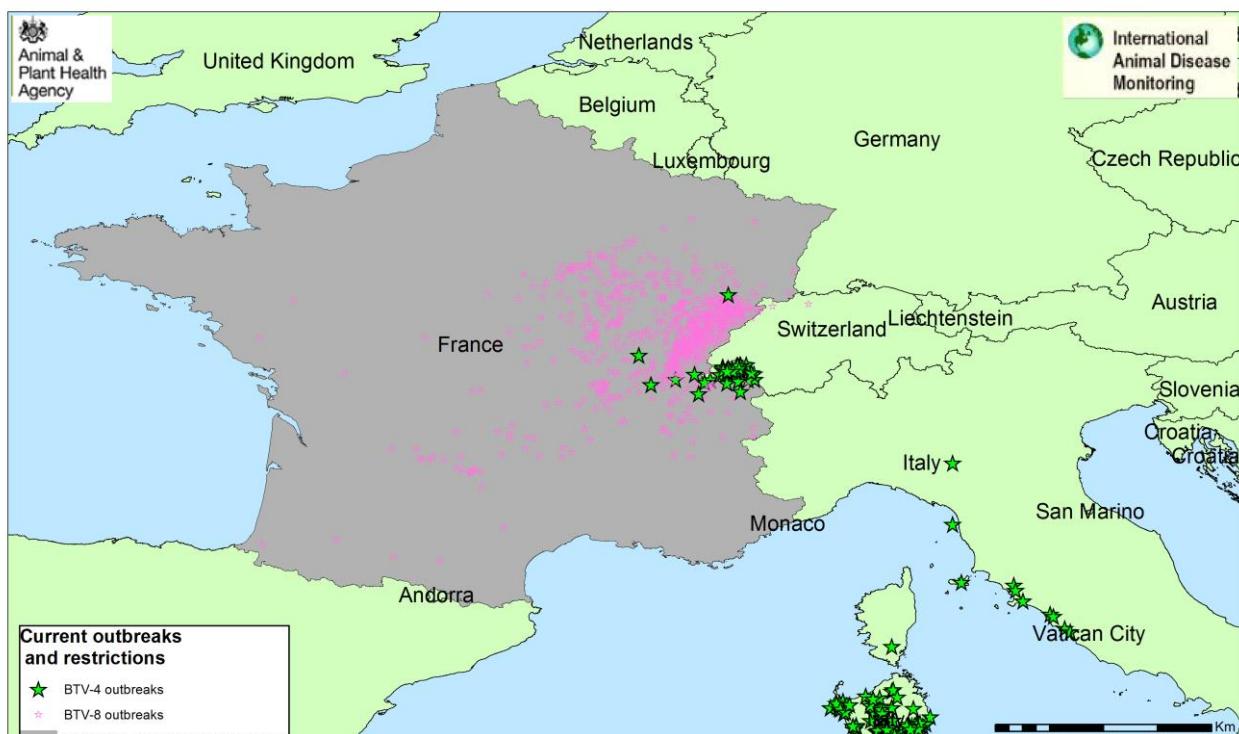
Bluetongue virus (BTV-4) in France

4th January 2018

Ref: VITT/1200 BTV-4 in France

Disease Report

Since our last report on the 30th November, France has now reported more than 50 new cases of BTV-4 in Haute Savoie, Ain and Saone et Loire region. We have also been notified of more singleton cases in the departments of Haute Saone, Jura, Yonne and Maine et Loire (not seen on the map). No animals (cattle, sheep nor goats) were exhibiting clinical signs (Ministère d'Agriculture, 2017). The finding of BTV-4 in several regions now, alongside the likely source of disease which is presumed to be imported animals from Corsica which entered France during the vector free season in early 2017, means that disease is unlikely to be eradicated now and instead a BTV-4 / BTV-8 restriction zone has been put in place across the whole of mainland France.



Map Prepared by IDM

Absolute Scale 1:8,000,000

Date prepared 31/12/2017

**BTV-8 in France and Switzerland and BTV-4 in France:
Outbreaks detected since October 2017**

Situation Assessment

According to the French authorities (Bréard *et al.*, 2017), surveillance was carried out at the fattening premises in Allier where the index case tested positive. All other animals were tested 21 days after the index case was euthanized; all the animals were negative. Investigations at the premises of origin of the calf revealed the dam and another cow were both positive for BTV-4 and that animals had been imported from Corsica in early 2017. Surveillance around the origin premises revealed more positive cases in the prevention zone. Of the 11 positive farms which were detected up to the 5th December, the within-herd prevalence was 5 to 10% which is considerably lower than that observed in Corsica, which was between 30 and 80% during August 2017, the height of the transmission season. In terms of animals moved from Corsica during the low vector activity season (and therefore presumably not vaccinated) a total of 8,731 animals were identified in 65 departments. The authorities have also traced all the animals from the prevention zone around the index case and these are all being followed up. The distribution of these farms is available in the cited reference, Bréard *et al.*, 2017.

Trade of susceptible species may continue to other Member States, provided the animals are vaccinated or naturally immune against both BTV-4 and BTV-8 and transport has been insecticide treated. Some countries may agree under a bilateral arrangement to accept animals which have not been vaccinated or are not naturally immune but move during the low vector activity season; the UK has no such arrangement with France and therefore these animals are not accepted for trade purposes.

The UK vector season, particularly in the South of England, has not come to a close yet, as egg-bearing female midges were still being detected in vector surveillance traps up to December and the weather has been relatively temperate since then.

Conclusion

We would like to remind all livestock owners that they should source animals responsibly by working with their private veterinarians and livestock dealers to make sure animals are correctly vaccinated and protected prior to travel. **This now means that animals must be correctly vaccinated against BTV-4 and BTV-8 or be naturally immune to both virus serotypes, prior to leaving the restriction zone.**

We would also like to remind keepers that if they wish to take animals for show purposes to a restriction zone and then return to a free area, they will need to make sure the animals are vaccinated *against both virus serotypes* prior to travelling into the Restriction Zone in France.

We will continue to monitor the current situation in France and disseminate any further updates from the French Authorities, particularly with regards to the most recent cases and the BTV-4 situation.

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References

Bréard, E., Bronner, A., Calavas, D., Grandcollot-Chabot, M., Le Bourg, V., Mornignat, E., Pandolfi, F., Pinguet, O., Sailleau, C. & Zientara, S. (2017) FCO-4 en France Continentale – point au 11 decembre 2017. https://www.plateforme-esa.fr/sites/default/files/FCO4-74%202017_12_11_vf_0.pdf

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