



Ref: VITT 1200/BT – Portugal
Date: 28 September 2007

Bluetongue (BTV-1) in Portugal

Note: Defra's Food and Farming Group, International Trade Core Function (FFG-ITCF) monitors outbreaks of high impact diseases around the world. Bluetongue (BT) is among those diseases of major concern.

1 Disease Report

Portugal reported an outbreak of bluetongue (BTV-1) in sheep to the European Commission on 21 September (European Commission, 2007). This outbreak occurred in Barrancos, Alentejo Region (Beja) on the border with Spain. Control measures include movement controls while vaccination is allowed (OIE, 2007).

2 Situation assessment and commentary

This is the first time that bluetongue BTV-1 has been diagnosed in Portugal. This outbreak is within the current restriction areas for bluetongue (BTV-4) in Portugal and Spain. The outbreak is adjacent to the combined restriction areas for BTV-4 and BTV-1 in Spain. The current restriction areas in Portugal have been modified to take this outbreak into account. Movements of live susceptible animals out of these restricted areas are controlled in accordance with EC Directives.

No movements of live susceptible animals from the affected areas of Portugal to the UK are currently permitted. Any potential spread of infected vector insects through wind-borne dispersal from Portugal to the UK appears unlikely due to the distances involved.



3 Conclusions

On the basis of the information available at this stage it is concluded that the likelihood of a BTV incursion from the affected area of Portugal to the UK is negligible.

Currently, Defra FFG-ITCF does not intend to carry out and publish a full risk assessment on this outbreak but will continue to monitor developments and re-assess the situation as new information become available.

4 References

European Commission. 2007. Bluetongue (BTV1) – BTV1 detected in Portugal. BT- URGENT FAX 163 (24/09/2007 09:30). Brussels, D1 BVG (07) D/41266.

OIE. 2007. Bluetongue, Portugal. PRT 25-09-07 OIE Alert Message. Received by e-mail Tuesday 25/09/2007 at 16:24.