

**ESTABLISHING COMPARTMENTALIZATION AS A TOOL
FOR HEALTH MANAGEMENT**

Communication from Chile

The following communication, dated 15 March 2012, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Chile.

1. Chile is a country of high health status in terms of freedom from the main pests and diseases of global significance. It is noted for applying the regionalization principle of the SPS Agreement in the areas of both plant and animal health. The country has therefore considered it appropriate to take a step forward in the area of animal health by implementing compartmentalization, as the result of a public-private endeavour conducted with the guidance of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), which has advocated compartmentalization in a number of SPS Committee meetings.

2. Chile's Agricultural and Livestock Service (SAG) is the authority responsible for, *inter alia*, protecting, maintaining and increasing the country's livestock. One of its functions is to adopt the appropriate sanitary measures to prevent, control and eradicate communicable animal diseases.

3. In its Terrestrial Animal Health Code, the OIE defines compartments as a tool for health management, using the term to mean "an animal subpopulation contained in one or more establishments under a common biosecurity management system with a distinct health status with respect to a specific disease or specific diseases for which required surveillance, control and biosecurity measures have been applied for the purpose of international trade".

4. In the Code, the OIE suggests that in disease-free countries or zones, "compartments preferably should be defined prior to the occurrence of a disease outbreak", since this would prevent production losses in the event of an outbreak and consequently facilitate international trade.

5. The principles of compartmentalization – such as biosecurity, animal identification, control of movements, traceability, surveillance and monitoring – are applied in the majority of the disease control and eradication programmes developed by SAG.

6. In view of the importance of aligning national animal-health regulations and management measures with the guidelines issued by the international organizations, SAG has begun implementing this management mechanism. It has the authority to approve, suspend or revoke the health status of a compartment.

7. On 23 December 2011, Resolution No. 8309 was issued, establishing compartmentalization as a tool for health management, applicable to the prevention, control and eradication of animal diseases.

8. The document states that the term "compartment" is to be taken as meaning one or more animal-production establishments and their related units, under a common biosecurity management system, containing an animal population with a distinct health status with respect to one or more specific diseases for which sufficient surveillance, control and biosecurity measures have been applied for the purpose of maintaining international trade and as a tool for disease management.

9. To gain official approval for a compartment, the interested party must fulfil certain requirements, as appropriate, such as: submit a formal request for approval of the compartment; define and technically substantiate the preventive nature of the compartment with respect to one or several diseases, determining its health status, the location of and relationship between all of its components and related units, the animal movements and the mitigation measures set out in the biosecurity plans; establish and document the epidemiological separation of the compartment, especially in relation to critical management factors and potential sources of infection; have a surveillance system in place for the early detection and control of the specific diseases in the compartment; have access to the diagnostic services of official laboratories for each specific disease in the compartment; have procedures in place for the timely notification to SAG of any change in the health status determined for the compartment; have an emergency plan ready for use in the event of a change in the level of exposure that may affect the health status of the compartment; have a self-monitoring system in place, adopted by the establishment, to ensure compliance with the requirements of the compartment.

10. If the information submitted by the interested party receives a favourable evaluation by SAG, the compartment will be approved by a SAG resolution.

11. SAG will establish a verification system to check ongoing compliance with the conditions of approval of the compartment.

12. Authorization of the compartment will be indefinite, as long as the conditions of approval are maintained.

13. Costs relating to the approval and maintenance of the compartment by SAG will be borne by the interested party.

14. SAG Resolution No. 393 of 20 January 2012 approved as a compartment the *Producción de cerdos del Complejo Agroindustrial Valle del Huasco* (Swine Production of the Huasco Valley Agro-Industrial Complex), located in the Atacama region in the north of the country.
