

**EVOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE  
ERADICATION PLAN IN ARGENTINA**

Meeting of 19, 20 and 21 March 2002

**I. SANITARY STATUS IN 2001**

**A. INTRODUCTION**

1. Since the reintroduction of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in Argentina, a new health policy management system has been introduced which is essentially guided by the principles of transparency and professionalism laid down in the National Foot-and-Mouth Disease Eradication Plan of 5 April 2001. A number of enactments were made in this connection, including, in particular, Resolution No. 58 of 24 May 2001 relating to the regionalization of the country and the control of the transit of animals, animal by-products and like products, Resolution No. 383 of 12 September 2001 on the notification information system and suspicion of vesicular disease, and Resolution No. 178 of 12 July 2001 on mandatory requirements for the transport of animals.

2. Under this policy of transparency, every single notification or suspicion of vesicular disease was registered, and communicated both to the international reference institutions and to organizations of livestock farmers, government institutions and the media in general.

3. As part of its strategy, SENASA has reverted to the non-governmental organizations such as the health control foundations and entities which played a leading role during the 1990s in eradicating foot-and-mouth disease in Argentina (Resolution No. 108/01).

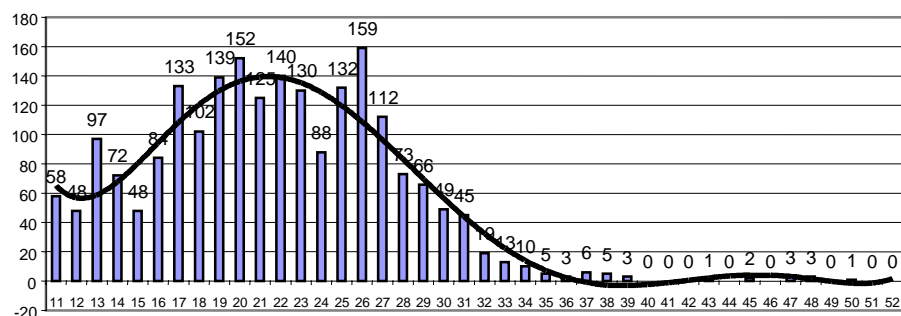
4. In the course of 2001, these foundations conducted two vaccination campaigns covering the entire cattle population of the national territory including north of the Río Negro and the province of Neuquén.

5. Thus, in a period of less than one year, the country's entire bovine livestock was covered in two vaccination campaigns and the number of FMD outbreaks was drastically reduced together with the risks associated with the presence of the disease at the national level.

**B. FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE STATUS IN 2001**

6. In Argentina, 2,126 FMD outbreaks were recorded in 2001. Since March, when records began to be kept, the highest number of outbreaks was recorded in May with a total of 604 cases, followed by a progressive decrease. The actual peak in the number of outbreaks (according to the date of intervention) occurred during the final week of June, with 159 cases reported. This was followed by a sharp decline, as can be seen in the graph below:

### Outbreaks per Epidemiological Week



By date of intervention

---Polynomial (new outbreaks)

7. Based on the geographical distribution of outbreaks, and taking account of the regionalization provisions of the National Foot-and-Mouth Disease Eradication Plan, the regions of Patagónica Sur and Patagónica Norte B are free of the disease, no outbreaks having been recorded in those regions. Thus, they have maintained their status of FMD free zone where vaccination is not practised.

8. Nor were any cases of the disease recorded in the provinces of Jujuy, Salta, Catamarca, La Rioja or San Juan, which correspond to the NOA or Cuyo regions.

9. The morbidity rate at the national level is 3.85 per cent, which corresponds to expectations given the rapid immunization achieved by vaccinating the exposed population.

10. The 2001 epidemic was due to outbreaks of strain A of the FMD virus.

11. Of a total of 270,000 livestock establishments in the country, only 2,126 have been affected since the beginning of the epidemic, i.e. less than 1 per cent (0.8 per cent).

#### C. NATIONAL VACCINATION CAMPAIGN 2001

12. As a priority measure for the control of foot-and-mouth disease, a massive campaign was launched to vaccinate the totality of the bovine population throughout the country, excepting the region to the south of the Río Negro and the province of Neuquén.

13. The vaccination campaign was tailored to each region into which the country was divided, according to its cattle breeding methods. An oil-based vaccine was used. The actual vaccination was performed by the local health entities and recorded at the local office of SENASA (Resolution No. 108/01).

14. The first massive FMD vaccination was completed by mid-July, with a total of 51.3 million cattle inoculated, and another 8.3 million were re-vaccinated owing to risk situations (perifocal areas) or for strategic reasons prior to livestock movements (Resolution 05/01).

15. On 31 December 2001, the second massive vaccination period was concluded, with 55,502,111 cattle vaccinated (Resolution 339/01).

16. Accordingly, the current immune population base has been improved, and this, coupled with the adoption of other control measures such as restrictions and requirements governing livestock

movement, has brought about a considerable decrease in the number of clinical cases within a period of less than one year.

#### D. MEETINGS AND INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

17. In 2001, two visits were conducted by inspectors from the European Union, who inspected the central and local health proceedings and visited SENASA offices in the interior of the country. Thanks to these inspections, Argentina's fresh meat market could be reopened, reflecting the sanitary status achieved through the implementation of the National FMD Eradication Plan (2002/45/EC).

18. A visit was also made by technicians from Cuenca del Plata, the final conclusions of whose audit provided a valuable contribution to the national control programme and enabled the plan to be rectified, in particular with respect to sanitary barriers.

19. Work was also begun during 2001 in the Patagónica Sur and Patagónica Norte B regions with a series of health strategies leading to the preparation of a document that was submitted to the International Office of Epizootics (OIE) with a view to declaring the region an FMD-free zone where vaccination is not practised. The document was presented to the FMD and other Epizootics Commission of the OIE and was successful. The Commission decided to approve Argentina's actions in this respect and to recommend favourable treatment in May, at the meeting of the General Committee. This would open up an important market for the export of animals, animal products and by-products from the zone in question.

## II. SANITARY STATUS IN 2002

20. At the beginning of 2002, five outbreaks of FMD from the end of 2001 still remained active: four in the province of La Pampa and one in Santiago del Estero. Four of them were terminated during the first week of 2002, and the remaining one, in the department of Chalileo, La Pampa, during the second week.

21. The only FMD outbreak this year occurred in the department of Río Cuarto in the province of Córdoba, and was confirmed during epidemiological week No. 4 (from 20-26 January). Following confirmation by the Central Laboratory (Type A virus), all animals from the establishment in question that presented any risk were slaughtered. No neighbouring establishments were affected, nor were there any secondary outbreaks.

22. No FMD outbreaks were recorded anywhere in the country during the month of February or in March thus far.

### Vaccination

23. In accordance with Resolution 34/02, the first vaccination period of 2002 began on 15 February. As of the date of this report (13 March 2002), 26 million doses have been distributed – approximately 50 per cent of the total number of animals to be vaccinated – of which more than 90 per cent have been used.

### Serological survey of FMD

24. A serological survey is being carried out at the national level with a view to detecting viral activity and quantifying the immunity level provided by the vaccine. This survey will be conducted on more than 80,000 bovine and ovine samples in the different regions of Argentina.

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