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CLASSICAL SWINE FEVER – BRAZILIAN EXPERIENCE IN REGIONALIZATION

Communication from Brazil

The following communication, received on 2 December 2005, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Brazil.

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1. In 2001, Brazil established its classical swine fever (CSF) free zone, made up of the States of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, Paraná, São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Goiás, Mato Grosso do Sul, Mato Grosso, Tocantins, Rio de Janeiro, Espírito Santo, Bahia, Sergipe, and the Federal District. These 14 States together account for almost 50 per cent of the Brazilian territory, and for almost the totality of commercial swine farms.

2. This free zone was established in the wake of joint efforts by producers and government bodies over a number of consecutive years, beginning with the investigations that led to an effective national vaccination campaign. The structure of the official veterinary services already set up to define the foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) free zone proved sufficient, and was used for the work that led to the eradication of CSF in the above-mentioned zone of Brazil.

3. The work carried out by Brazil resulted in an extremely secure free zone, with extensive protected areas, natural and geographical barriers, official monitoring of quarantine and transit of animals, as well as vaccination. It should be noted that there have been no cases of classical swine fever in the Brazilian CSF-free zone since implementation. The virus was in fact never reintroduced, proving that the zone is secure.

4. The fact that the FMD virus can be transmitted through pig meat makes it impossible to establish a direct correlation between the CSF-free zone and the increase in the number of importers of the product from Brazil. There is no point in establishing such a relationship without, at the same time, observing the progress of the FMD-free zone. The recognition by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) of the first Brazilian FMD-free zone made it possible, for the first time, for Brazil to export chilled pig meat, and led to a 24 per cent increase in the number of importers of frozen pig meat. The number of importers of Brazilian products derived from pigs continued to increase. Thus, following the establishment of the CSF-free zone at the beginning of 2001 Brazil managed, by the end of that year, to achieve a 17.64 per cent increase in the number of importers as compared to 2000. In 2003, there was an increase of 41.86 per cent in the number of countries importing frozen Brazilian pig meat. That increase was made possible by the stabilization of the FMD situation and the CSF-free zone.

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5. Other factors in addition to those mentioned above, such as technical upgrading of farms, expenditure on genetic and sanitary development, and above all, the abundant grain harvests (soya beans and maize) contributed to the steady increase in the productivity of Brazilian swine farms. Thus, even prior to the establishment of the FMD- and CSF-free zones, production was steadily increasing, which accounts for the fact that Brazil ranks among the leading producers and exporters of pig meat.

6. However, in spite of the sanitary status of the Brazilian swine population, certain major importing countries impose restrictions on Brazilian pig meat related to classical swine fever. A closer look at these restrictions reveals that the lack of recognition of equivalent sanitary measures and the failure to recognize regionalization are the main problems. Added to this is the failure to bring sanitary requirements into line with the OIE recommendations. It is important to note in this connection that the effective recognition by the OIE of countries' free zones, as was the case for FMD, could help to facilitate bilateral recognition by importers, thus avoiding subjectivity and excessive and undue delays.

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