

**DECLARATION AS A COUNTRY FREE OF CLASSICAL SWINE FEVER**

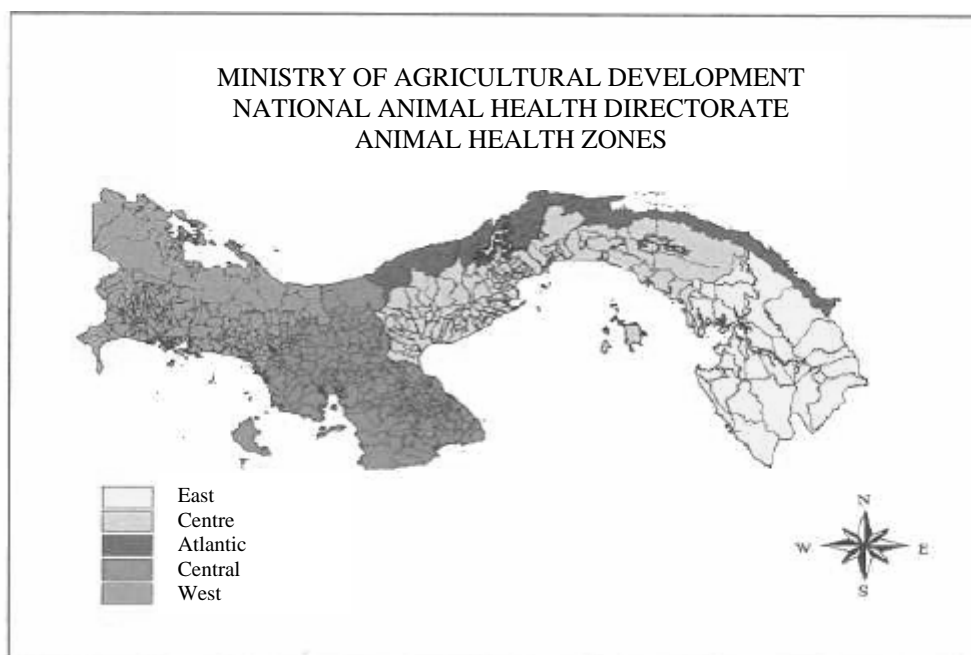
Communication by Panama

The following communication, received on 14 June 2007, is being circulated at the request of Panama.

1. On the basis of the measures set forth in Chapter 2.6.7 of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) applied in the national territory, Panama submitted to the last general session of the OIE a declaration of its status as a "country free of classical swine fever (CSF)".
2. There is no evidence of any cases of CSF in Panama since 1962, when the last outbreak took place. Since then, serological monitoring has been carried out using the Enzyme-Linked-Immuno-Sorbent Assay (ELISA) technique, and the results have been negative. Since 1999, with the implementation of the Classical Swine Fever Prevention Programme (PREFIP), serological monitoring of CSF has been reinforced through the adoption of a sampling design at the national level.
3. Law No. 23 of 15 July 1997 sets out the prevention measures to be taken to ensure that the virus is not introduced into the territory of Panama, with port, airport and border controls in which the agricultural quarantine staff conducts rigorous inspections of equipment, cargo, means of transport, waste, and so forth, applying the necessary health measures to reduce the risk of this and other diseases entering the country.
4. Law No. 6 of 30 March 1993 establishes "an animal inspection zone in the border area with Colombia", a zone in which the raising, fattening, processing, purchase or sale of cattle, swine or other cloven hoofed animals is prohibited, and in which only the confined rearing and fattening for domestic consumption is permitted subject to authorization by the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA). Although this health measure was imposed to prevent the introduction of foot and mouth disease, the monitoring thereof has meant that there has been an epidemiological surveillance of CSF.
5. Resolution ALP 033-ADM-02 of 28 August 2002 from the Ministry of Agricultural Development establishes controls for the domestic movement of animals, strategically dividing the country from the animal health point of view into five zones: West, Central, Centre, East, and Atlantic (see Figure 1), delimited by sanitary cordons controlled by checkpoints. Swine destined for slaughter, exhibitions, shows, reproduction and fattening are only allowed through the checkpoints subject to the presentation of health documents such as: a health certificate, an animal movement

certificate, negative laboratory test results for viruses of the Flaviviridae family, genus *Pestivirus*, to which CSF belongs.

Figure 1: Animal health zones



6. Resolution No. DAL-093-ADM-2005 of 15 November 2005 resulted in the creation within the MIDA of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Evaluation Unit (UNESYF) as the body responsible for the health assessment of countries and of processing plants and establishments in order to determine whether or not they are eligible to export live swine, semen and/or swine embryos and check for contaminated material destined for Panama.

7. In Panama, 61.62 per cent of the swine population are raised on technological farms, while 38.38 per cent are raised in backyard farms. This represents an indispensable tool for implementing the CSF Prevention Programme.

#### Swine Production Centres

Type	Number of farms	Number of swine
Technological	249	201,645
Backyard	13,243	125,608
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,492</b>	<b>327,253</b>

Source: MIDA-COPEG 2006

It should be noted that backyard animals in Panama are kept in pens, and are not free roaming; there is a downward trend.

8. 1999 saw the launching of the CSF Prevention Programme, which helped to strengthen the technical and financial commitment, to build up the capacity of the technical staff in the field, and to expand the scope of the prevention efforts.

9. In 2000 and 2001, sampling was conducted in the technological and backyard farms: of the 2,053 samples collected, all were negative. In 2002, 265 backyard samples were collected on 78 farms, and in 2003 a total 1,200 samples were collected, all of which were negative (backyard/technological).

10. In 2004, a sampling design was adopted for backyard animals at the national level, in which the risk was categorized by municipality, with a total of 900 samples, all of which were negative. And this year saw the preparation of the document supporting Panama's status as a CSF-free country, which was sent to the OIE.

11. In 2005, sampling was conducted in the slaughterhouses serving the technological farms (approximately 2,146 samples); in 2006, sampling was again conducted in the slaughterhouses serving the technological farms (2,146 samples) and among backyard animals (900 samples). The results were negative in both cases.

12. In the course of 2007, samples are being collected on a monthly basis in each of the ten regions of the country with a view to processing 1,122 samples from backyard animals and 2,160 samples from technological farms by the end of the year.

#### Timetable of serological surveillance of classical swine fever

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total number of samples	3900	2053		265	1200	900	2146	3046	3282

\* Samples were taken from slaughterhouses serving technological farms and in backyard farms within the national territory.

13. The CSF Prevention Programme includes education and training of all technical staff with respect to the disease. This continuing education involves chats and meetings with producers, and in April 2007, the "second simulation" was conducted to help build up the technical capacity of staff in the Veterinary Services and other entities involved in dealing with emergencies in the country. In addition, there is a Technical Manual of Rules and Procedures for the Notification and Eradication of Outbreaks of Classical Swine Fever in the Republic of Panama, which sets out the actions and measures to take in case of a health emergency. This manual is disseminated in the meetings held with producers and is included in the simulations planned within the national territory.

14. There is an emergency plan to deal with outbreaks of any exotic disease which sets out the Government's general policies for combating the disease and all of the possible strategies to be implemented depending on the actual nature of the outbreak, the extent to which it has spread at the time of detection, and the socio-political and economic implications involved in combating the disease.

15. The emergency plan also covers institutional organization, administrative procedures for obtaining and using emergency funds, and interaction among the MIDA operational units and other State institutions.

16. Where a disease is suspected, the National Animal Health Emergency System (SINESA), established by executive Decree No. 168 of 5 November 2001 is triggered, immediately bringing the Animal Health Emergency Programme Implementation Group (GEPESA) into action. Thus, the procedures for the prevention, control and/or eradication of an outbreak of CSF in Panama are in place.

17. For further information, contact the Ministry of Agricultural Development, Altos de Curundu, Avenida Manuel E. Melo, Edificio 575, Panama City, Panama; tel.: +507-507-0707; fax: +507-507-0886; e-mail: [ebravo@mida.gob.pa](mailto:ebravo@mida.gob.pa).

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