

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS CONCERNING THE RISKS OF
FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE ASSOCIATED WITH TRADE
IN ANIMALS AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS**

Submission by the Office international des Epizooties (OIE)

1. The recent occurrence of foot-and-mouth disease, first in the United Kingdom and later in France (two outbreaks) and in the Netherlands has led certain WTO Member countries to take emergency health measures on imports in order to protect their countries from any incursion of the virus causing the disease. The effect of these measures has been a ban on international trade in various agricultural commodities from a number of European countries.

2. Since some of the notifications received by the WTO Secretariat were discussed briefly during the SPS Committee meeting of 14 and 15 March 2001, the OIE considers it appropriate to point out that the standard relating to foot-and-mouth disease, contained in Chapter 2.1.1. of the *International Animal Health Code (the Code)*, the text of which can be consulted on the OIE Web site (www.oie.int), was completely revised between 1990 and 1997, ensuring that it is fully in line with the latest scientific knowledge about the disease.

3. Chapter 2.1.1. provides a precise list of the commodities from infected countries or zones that could spread the foot-and-mouth disease virus (Articles 2.1.1.8. and 2.1.1.28). It is worthwhile to review this list under the present circumstances:

Live animals

- Ruminants (including animals from the Camelidae family), as well as domestic and wild pigs.

Products

- Semen of ruminants and pigs;
- Embryos/ova of ruminants and pigs;
- Fresh meat of domestic and wild ruminants and pigs;
- Meat products of domestic and wild ruminants and pigs;
- Products of animal origin (ruminants and pigs) intended for use in animal feed or for agricultural or industrial use;
- Products of animal origin (ruminants and pigs) intended for pharmaceutical or surgical use;
- Non-sterile biological products (from ruminants and pigs);
- Straw and forage (such as hay).

4. The *Code* considers other commodities, including cereal grains, fruit, vegetables and tubers, as not likely to present such a risk.

5. It is important to emphasize that the *Code* does allow for the importation of the commodities mentioned in the above list, even from countries or zones infected with the disease, subject to certain conditions for destroying the virus, as described in the *Code*. These products include:
 - Meat from ruminants and pigs if the products having been processed to ensure the destruction of the foot-and-mouth disease virus (canning, thorough cooking, drying after salting);
 - Milk and cream intended for human consumption if they have been treated to ensure the destruction of the foot-and-mouth disease virus (ultra-high temperature treatment (UHT), short-time high temperature – short-time pasteurization (HTST) or, depending on the pH of the milk, double HTST), as well as milk powder and milk products prepared from milk subjected to one of the aforementioned processes.
 6. Other procedures are specified for milk intended for use in animal feeding, as well as for animal products such as wool, hair, bristles, raw hides and skins from domestic and wild ruminants and pigs.
 7. The *Code* provides infected countries with the possibility of regionalizing infected zones within their territory by applying Article 2.1.1.4 or 2.1.1.5.
 8. In addition to the current situation in Europe, there has been an increase of outbreaks of FMD in countries that had previously eradicated the disease, for example in South America. These events in no way bring into question sanitary policies for international trade recommended by the OIE.
 9. Insofar as unfounded information on the disease status of certain countries with respect to FMD has recently been disseminated, the OIE encourages WTO Members to consult its Web site, which is regularly updated, in order to verify whether the disease free status of the countries in question has indeed been suspended by the OIE following a declaration of disease outbreak.
 10. In providing the present information, the OIE wishes to help WTO Members in any way it can to fulfil their obligations arising from the SPS Agreement.
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