



ANIMAL HEALTH IN PORTUGAL, 1992

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SUMMARY

A general overview of the animal health of portuguese livestock is presented and referred to 1992, based on official public records and publications.

The main problems, related with the activity of the livestock sub-sector, raised during the transitional period negotiated by Portugal with the EC, which ended in December 1992, are outlined and discussed.

Both the livestock sub-sector and the corresponding animal health structures are quantified and described. The present organization of the Ministry of Agriculture and its influence on the sanitary chain of decision at local, regional and central levels is presented.

Animal health panorama of different food and leisure species is shown referring either to the obligatory sanitary programmes or to the facultative prophylactic activities of the main diseases affecting portuguese animal production systems.



RESUME

Cet article présente une revue générale de l'état sanitaire du cheptel portugais en 1992, fondée sur les déclarations officielles et sur des publications.

Il souligne et discute les principaux problèmes rencontrés pendant la période transitoire négociée par le Portugal avec la C.E.E., période qui s'est terminée en décembre 1992.

Les structures de l'élevage et de la protection sanitaire sont décrites et quantifiées. L'organisation actuelle du Ministère de l'agriculture et son rôle dans la chaîne de décision sanitaire aux niveaux local, régional et central sont présentés.

Un panorama de la santé des différentes espèces animales de rente ou de loisir est tracé en fonction des programmes de prophylaxie obligatoire ou de prophylaxie facultative des principales maladies atteignant les systèmes de production animale au Portugal.

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I - INTRODUCTION

At the end of the six years transition period negotiated by the portuguese authorities with the EC, the animal health standards of the herds show a significantly different profile depending both from the species and the animal production system involved. The main reasons for such disparity seems to be associated with the degree of economic and social development of different areas of the country and also with the enterprising attitude disclosed by some animal production sectors (Almeida, 1992; Gulbenkian, 1993).

The most impressive results achieved by portuguese farmers concern the sanitary standards related with livestock species made for industrial products - milk, pork, poultry and eggs. These production units (rather than herds or flocks) are market-oriented, well organized and producers show a better technical preparedness and are usually associated both at local and central levels.

In contrast, great difficulties are shown by more traditional production systems such as beef, small ruminants and extensive pig farming.

In the animal health context, the integration of Portugal within the EC in 1986 was an indispensable challenge and a welcome incentive that no other political and economical scenario would probably allow.

During the transition period which have ended in December 1992, new structures and a new attitude towards the adaptation of the veterinary services at local, regional and central levels would be necessary. Moreover, the animal health authorities should have the obligation to mobilize farmers and technical staff to the need for adequate preparation to face with efficacy the hard reality of open market competition.

Being more specific, the activity of the livestock subsector during the transition period was conditioned by three main animal health issues: i) the decision to fulfil the aims proposed by the Commission to eradicate a number of diseases such as Tuberculosis, Brucellosis, Leucosis, Classical Swine Fever, African Swine Fever, Peripneumonia and Foot-and-Mouth Disease; ii) the transference of responsibility for the implementation of all field activities related with prophylactic interventions to newly created farmers organizations (Agrupamentos de Defesa Sanitária - ADS); and, iii) the fully agreement to adopt all EC measures to reinforce free movements of live animals and its products - establishment of Sanitary Intervention Zones (ZIS), the performance of a new guide of proceedings for veterinary actions, and the installation of transnational information networks as ANIMO and SHIFT.

II - THE LIVESTOCK SUB-SECTOR

Portugal is located in the west extreme of Iberian Peninsula, covers 89.000 km² and its population averages 10 million habitants. In the present analysis, data used refers only to the mainland as both Madeira and Azores islands have specific sanitary rules.

Portuguese agriculture has been suffering a serious impact wave after joining EC and, presently, contributes with a modest 8% to the GNP.

Livestock sub-sector is an important component producing 51% of the total value of the agriculture annual product. It has a significative socio-economical importance mainly in the small herd system of the littoral Centre-North region and in the marginal agriculture areas of the interior

Highlands and the South plains.

The total number of bovines was estimated in 1989 on 1 96 211 animals distributed by 340 209 herds. The dairy population was of 300 000 cows spread by 96 071 herds (DGP, 1988).

In 1989, the pig population was estimated on 2 530 266 animals, from these 340 209 were breeding sows. There was 148 378 registered piggeries which include around 3 000 herds of extensive type (montado) with 36 813 breeding iberian pigs.

For the same year, 2 906 878 sheep were counted distributed on 100 203 flocks.

The caprines were 696 704 in 64 169 identified flocks.

The poultry sector is the best organized with 2846 units of industrial exploitation (including breeding, broiler production and egg production), a total average flock of around 8.5 million birds and a

broiler production capacity of about 50 millions, within 550 specialised units.

The number of horses officially identified was around 70 000 and there was 100 000 donkeys and hybrids.

III - ANIMAL HEALTH STRUCTURES

The role of the veterinary administration has been showing deep modifications in the last 15 years. The division of the continental territory in seven agricultural regions has promoted the alteration of the animal health information circuits and affected the coherence of the decision chain in the sanitary process. Recently (April 1993), the Ministry of Agriculture suffer further changes which did not consider the existence of an independent central veterinary authority.

The animal health activities are supported by a network of diagnostic laboratoires which includes six regional units, four private accredited labs and a central national reference laboratory.

Between 1987 and 1990, 117 local associations (ADS) of bovine and/or small ruminant farmers were created through the implementation of a development program proposed by the central veterinary authority and financially supported by the EC. The main objective of the program was the transference of responsibility for implementing field activities related with animal

health. Presently, around 95% of the bovines and 75% of the small ruminants are visited by ADS teams. These private associations of farmers are responsible for the execution of prophylactic interventions both from nationwide health programs (ex. Tuberculosis, Brucellosis, Leucosis) or specific local sanitary problems (ex. mastites, deworming, clamydiosis).

The present notification of disease outbreaks is based on the type of information system decided and utilized by each regional authority, as the official notification system, based on the 23 Sanitary Intervention Zones approved by the EC and harmonised by portuguese law from 1991, is not yet implemented.

In the present circumstances, it is not possible to recognize a central veterinary authority, in Portugal. Alternatively, there are seven regional decision bodies on animal health and a centrally located institution with competence for preparation of laws and other sanitary rules and for international relations.

IV - OBLIGATORY ANIMAL HEALTH PROGRAMMES

The data presented was collected in 1992, obtained from official publications of the ex-National Directorate of Livestock and referred to the continental territory, exclusively.

BOVINE BRUCELLOSIS

Due to the different criteria of statistical organization of data used in the seven agricultural

regions to generate epidemiological indicators it is not possible to differentiate the sanitary situation between dairy and beef herds.

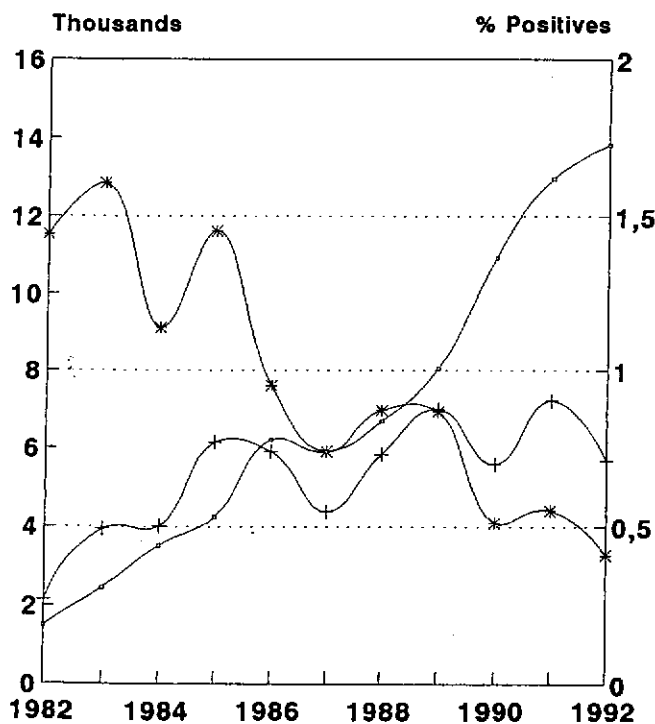
It is estimated that over 95% of the dairy herd and 60 to 70% of the beef cattle are surveyed. From the 1 382 696 blood tests performed, 5673 bovines were positive (0.41%).

Unfortunately, there is data from herd infection only available in two of the seven agricultural regions. The results obtained show a proportion of infection around 1%.

Some herds keep using B19 vaccination on the young female replacements. In 1992, 16 677 calves were vaccinated.

The evolution of the bovine brucellosis programme and the proportion of infected animals detected for a 10-year period are shown in figure 1.

Figure 1 : Bovine brucellosis Disease evolution over a 10-year period



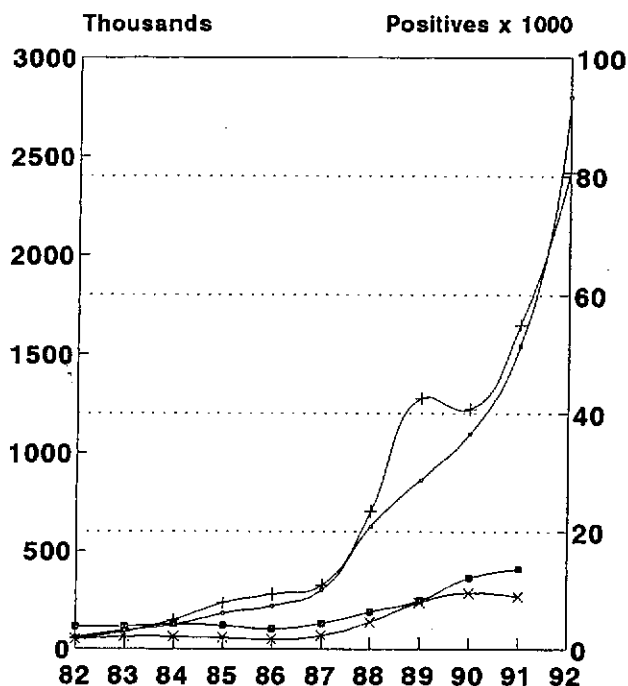
— An. Tested x100 + No. Positives * %
Source: DGP

When analysing the situation of the infection at flock level, it is possible to aggregate data only from four regions showing that from the 51 321 identified flocks 3 304 were infected (6,43%).

The significant levels of infection, both in animals or flocks, explain the wider use of Rev1 vaccine. Last year, 122 403 young females were vaccinated.

The evolution of the small ruminants brucellosis programme and the proportion of infected animals detected for a 10-year period are shown in figure 2.

Figure 2 : Small Ruminants Brucellosis Disease evolution over a 10-year period



Note that there is no distinction between sheep and goat data in 1992

— Sheep + S. Positives — Goats * G. Positives

Source: DGP

SMALL RUMINANTS BRUCELLOSIS

From 1992, the official data available make no distinction between ovine and caprine species, probably assuming that the majority of flocks are mixed or utilize the same pastures.

There were sampled 2 796 912 animals with 80 560 sero-converters (2.86%).

The ruminants detected as positives are slaughtered and the farmers financially compensated. Different reasons, such as the regionalization of sanitary decision and the lack of coordination from a central veterinary authority, originate great delays in the removal of the infected animals and compromise the success of the current prophylactic programmes.

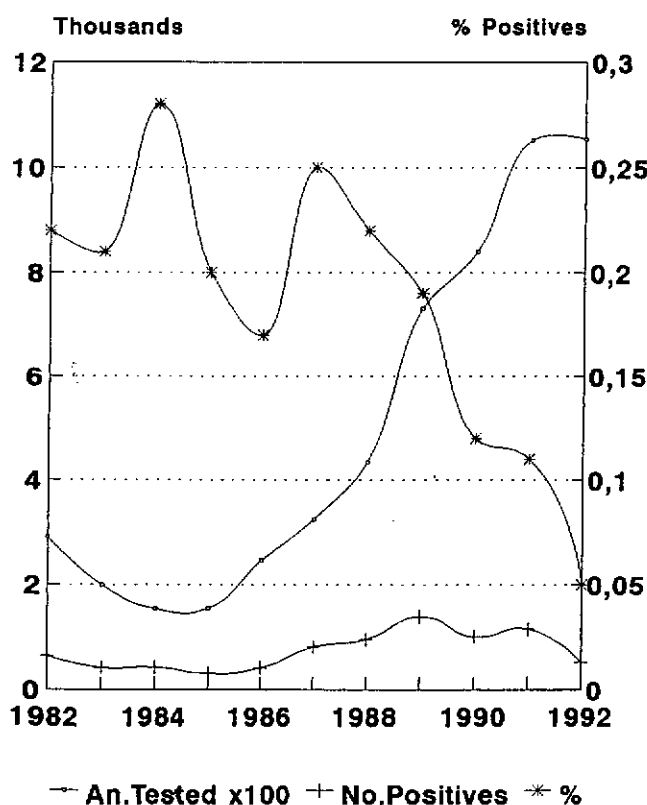
BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS

The annual results seem to confirm the success of one of the most old prophylactic campaigns (figure 3).

From 803 411 dairy animals tuberculinized (including non-dairy animals from four regions) 336 were reactive (0.04%). In the beef herd, 250 845 animals were surveyed and 266 detected positive (0.1%).

The annual survey includes the execution of the double tuberculin method (bovine and avian PPD tuberculin, 0.01ml each dosis) with the observation and measurement of an eventual reaction, after 72 hours.

Figure 3 : Bovine tuberculosis
Disease evolution over a 10-year period



Source: DGP

ENZOOTIC BOVINE LEUCOSIS

Presently, due to the low level of infection revealed, only the herds with imported animals or where clinical signs are shown and/or post-mortem lesions observed were blood surveyed.

From the 68 561 individual sera tested 678 were positive, corresponding to 54 infected herds.

CONTAGIOUS BOVINE PLEUROPNEUMONIA

The disease was circumscribed to the littoral Centre and North areas.

The 977 413 bovines from 236 338 herds surveyed, have disclosed 2817 sera positive and 3752 suspicious (0.67%), corresponding to 4646 infected herds (1.96%).

In the post-mortem inspection of 8825 animals compulsory slaughtered, specific lesions were detected in 2446 carcasses distributed by 829 disease foci (0.35%).

FOOT-AND MOUTH DISEASE

The last occurrence of the disease was from 1982. The prohibition of use of vaccines was passed in 1989. Presently, an emergency national plan is in preparation as has been approved by the EC Permanent Veterinary Committee in January 1993.

AFRICAN SWINE FEVER

During the period under study, only two outbreaks of active disease were officially notified which occurred in the extreme south of the country, with 79 dead pigs and 869 slaughtered.

CLASSICAL SWINE FEVER

There was no notified case of the disease.

AFRICAN EQUINE FEVER

There was no notified case of the disease.

The Decision 92/531/CE, from 9 december, brought to an end the surveillance zone measures applied to Portugal, allowing free circulation of equides and giving the free disease status to the country.

NEWCASTLE DISEASE

One outbreak was officially notified.

During the year, 70 millions birds were vaccinated.

RABIES

Portugal is free from the disease since 1960.

However, a national prophylatic programme

based on compulsory dog vaccination and other defensive measures has being enforced. A total of 520 446 dogs were vaccinated.

EQUINOCCOCOSIS-HYDATIDOSIS

The pilot control programme initiated in 1984 was, during 1992, limited to sanitary education campaigns at primary schools.

No data was available both from health or agricultural authorities.

V - DISEASES OF FACULTATIVE PROPHYLAXIS

Referred in this chapter diseases which are included in the list B from OIE with notification records kept by the portuguese animal health authorities.

ANTHRAX

No cases of the disease were officially notified.

Approximately 100 000 ruminants were vaccinated in the southern regions of Portugal.

AUJESKY DISEASE

Ten outbreaks of the disease were notified with no descriptive elements available.

The number of pigs vaccinated was 1 356 750.

LEPTOSPIROSIS

Although no cases of the disease were notified, around half a million animals (bovines, pigs and dogs) were vaccinated.

PARATUBERCULOSIS

Four outbreaks of the disease were officially notified.

CONTAGIOUS AGALAXIA OF SMALL RUMINANTS

No outbreaks of the disease were officially notified.

Approximately 300 000 dosis of vaccine were inoculated in small ruminants.

ATROPHIC RHINITIS

Officially, there was no notification of disease cases.

Approximately, 422 000 pigs were vaccinated.

EQUINE INFLUENZA

Although no cases of the disease were officially notified, 12 000 horses were vaccinated.

EQUINE PIROPLASMOSIS (BABESIOSIS)

A serologic test applied to 461 horses detected 197 positive animals (*B. equi* 157 and *B. caballi* 40).

AVIAN VIRUSES

There are no official data on the occurrence of avian viruses affecting portuguese flocks. However, the number of dosis of different vaccines used to immunize the avian population was as follows:

Infectious Bronquitis	20 millions
Laringotraqueitis	3,2 millions
Poxvirus Disease	3,8 millions
Gumboro Disease	36,7 millions
Marek Disease	4 millions

VI - BIBLIOGRAPHY

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