



United States
Department of
Agriculture

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Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Service

Veterinary Services

Washington, DC
20250

Dr. D. Remeika
State Food and Veterinary Service
Siesiku Str. 19
LT-2010 Vilnius
LITHUANIA

Dear Dr. Remeika:

Thank you again for the information you provided in support of your request that Lithuania be considered free from classical swine fever (CSF) and swine vesicular disease (SVD). This information supplements your previous foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) submissions. Per your request, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is evaluating the status of Lithuania with regard to these three diseases concurrently. Once the information is considered complete, we will need to conduct a site review for verification purposes and to clarify any questions regarding the submitted information.

Your submissions have been very helpful to us in our evaluation. However, the review team has identified several areas where more information is needed in order to proceed. Foremost, we were unable to establish what commodities other than ice cream you wish to export to the United States. We understand that your primary interest is recognition by the United States that Lithuania is free from FMD, CSF, and SVD. However, it would be helpful to us to know what specific commodities you wish to export.

Other areas in which further information is needed are presented in the format of the 11 factors listed in Title 9, *Code of Federal Regulations*, section 92.2 that Veterinary Services considers essential for evaluating animal disease status. We would appreciate your reply to each of our points.

We look forward to working with you during this process.

Sincerely,

W. Ron DeHaven
Deputy Administrator
Veterinary Services

Enclosure



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1. Authority, organization, and infrastructure of veterinary services

Please describe the approximate number of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and support staff employed at each official location of the State Food and Veterinary Services, from headquarters to the district offices.

Please provide a copy (in English) of the brochure "A Guide to Farmers in an Infected Area." Please also provide copies (in English) of the following legislation:

1. Requirements on CSF control
2. On the control of contagious pig diseases
3. Requirements on control of contagious diseases and particular SVD

Please describe in more detail how the prohibition on swill feeding is enforced, particularly among backyard producers. How is compliance monitored and what are the penalties for noncompliance? What specific types of waste are prohibited?

What is the role of private veterinarians in surveillance and control of CSF and SVD? What are the specific roles of local government and the Government of Lithuania should an outbreak of CSF or SVD occur?

2. Disease status of the region

Please describe in greater detail the methods used to eradicate CSF from Lithuania after the 1990-1992 outbreaks. How has the "routine slaughter of sows and boars" ensured complete destruction of all vaccinated swine?

Please provide any available data concerning the spatial distribution of wild boar populations within Lithuania and describe how these population estimates were generated. Has CSF ever been found in wild boar in the country and if so, which strain?

In the interest of identifying risk pathways for disease introduction into the United States, please provide detailed information regarding export procedures (including storage or quarantine conditions and times), transport procedures, and projections concerning the amount of each commodity you intend to export.

3. Disease status of adjacent regions

Your submission indicates that the Republic of Belarus and the Kaliningrad region of Russia are free of FMD. However, neither is recognized as free by the United States, nor are they on the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) list of FMD-free regions. Can you clarify their status and describe the level of harmony and collaboration that exists between Lithuania and these two regions? What are your procedures for recognizing other countries as free of disease?

Similarly, the United States does not currently recognize any of the countries or regions adjacent to Lithuania as free from CSF or SVD. Please describe your knowledge of the current situation in these regions with regard to CSF and SVD, including the last known occurrence in domestic swine and/or wild boar.

Has surveillance for CSF or SVD been conducted in the wildlife in the adjacent regions? If so, has evidence of either disease ever been found? Please provide any available data regarding such surveillance and its outcomes, including a description of the surveillance methods. What geographic or environmental characteristics of the border regions might influence the risk of SVD occurring or CSF reoccurring in Lithuania?

4. Disease control program of the region

Please provide a copy (in English) of the referenced Contingency Plan for CSF. Is there an equivalent contingency plan for SVD? If so, please provide a copy (in English). What surveillance measures would be conducted in the protection and surveillance zones in an outbreak situation? Would depopulation be used if either disease occurred? If so, what populations would be depopulated and how would the carcasses be disposed of? What testing would be required prior to release of a quarantined area?

Please describe any progress in implementing the animal identification, herd registration and movement control system in swine, and the projected date of completion. Please also clarify the indemnity plan for animals that are destroyed or confiscated during an outbreak situation, and explain the statement on page 11, "At present not all costs would be covered if animals are not insured on private initiative."

5. Vaccination status

It is noted that vaccination for CSF was prohibited in Lithuania as of July 1, 2000. When did the last vaccination occur? How many animals may still have titers resulting from vaccination? Please describe any serological monitoring for CSF in domestic pigs 6 months to 1 year of age after vaccination ceased, as prescribed by OIE guidelines.

Regarding FMD, we are unclear on your country's past vaccination activities. Your original submission stated that vaccination against FMD has been prohibited since 1984 and cattle vaccination was canceled in 1985. However, your response letter mentioned a May 1995 date for ending cattle vaccination. Was vaccination continued despite the earlier prohibition? If so, what was the rationale for continuing to vaccinate?

6. Separation from higher risk regions

We have no questions under this factor.

7. Movement control and biosecurity from higher risk regions

From which countries does Lithuania import commodities that could potentially carry the CSF virus (i.e., live swine, pork meat or meat products, swine semen/ova, or embryos)? Are any of these countries considered to present a higher level of CSF or SVD risk than Lithuania? Please provide recent data on the quantities of these imports by country, as well as updated information for 2001 and 2002 concerning imports that could potentially carry FMD virus.

Please describe the inspection procedures at border control points in greater detail. What proportion of imported animals or products is inspected each year? What volume and types of commodities have been seized at border control points in the past year? How is local border traffic controlled? What import restrictions apply to meat, meat products, and other materials in passenger baggage that could harbor FMD, CSF, or SVD virus?

On page 22 of your import requirement document, FMD is not listed as a disease of roe deer. Is there a specific reason for not considering this to be a susceptible species?

What is the purpose of the 14 quarantine stations mentioned in Annex 5 of the CSF submission? Which authority maintains and controls them? Where are they located?

8. Livestock demographics and marketing practices

You have provided us with swine population data for Lithuania. If possible, please provide a map of the geographic distribution of these populations (i.e., a livestock density map). What provisions have been made to facilitate tracing suspect animals from market or slaughter back to the source herd?

It is noted that Lithuania has no major livestock marketing centers. How is the sale or exchange of animals accomplished? Please describe in more detail the patterns of animal movement within Lithuania. Where are the major abattoirs located? What relevant production, processing, and marketing patterns exist for milk and dairy products?

9. Disease surveillance

It is noted that List A diseases are reportable by law. What penalties are involved for failure to report? What public awareness programs are in place to encourage the reporting of suspected cases? How many suspected cases of CSF, SVD and FMD were investigated in 2001 and 2002? What procedures were followed in conducting the investigations?

You have provided us with results of a serologic survey, conducted in 2002, for CSF in domestic swine. Please describe the sampling strategy in more detail, including how animals/herds were chosen for sampling. What was the estimated sensitivity and specificity of the testing procedure? How were previously vaccinated animals differentiated?

Please provide updates for 2001 and 2002 on collection and testing of serum samples for FMD. What sampling and statistical approaches were used for collecting these samples?

10. Diagnostic laboratory capabilities

Your submission states that the National Veterinary Laboratory is building a bio-level III laboratory and will begin to use the FAVN test for CSF in 2003. Please describe the progress that has been made toward these goals. What measures are in place in the National Veterinary Laboratory and its departments to prevent the escape of biological agents? What specific training have the diagnostic personnel received regarding CSF? Who performs the IF testing for CSF?

What are the diagnostic capabilities of laboratories located in the 10 counties with regard to CSF and SVD? How many of the county laboratories are approved for FMD diagnosis? What diagnostic tests are being conducted for the three diseases? What personnel are available in each of the laboratories, and what are their levels of expertise?

11. Emergency response capability

What procedures are in place to identify outbreaks of CSF or SVD should they occur? What financial, personnel, and other resources are available specifically for the purpose of implementing emergency response procedures?

Please give your best estimate concerning the amount of time it would take to detect and report to the international community the presence of CSF should it be reintroduced into Lithuania. How much additional time would be required after detection to stop exports of animals and products that could carry CSF?

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