



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Crisis management in food, animals and plants
The Director

Brussels
SANTE//

Dear Colleagues,

Subject: Testing frequency for certain animal disease monitoring

The Commission has provided guidelines, adopted rules and indicated practical ways to address the challenges posed by the COVID-19 measure imposed by the authorities.

One of these practical challenges is the difficult logistics that some veterinary services may be facing to fully comply with the testing frequencies mandated in the context of eradication programmes or the maintenance of certain disease-free statuses.

The testing regimes described in legislation normally indicates the expected frequency using time binding parameters. However, in most cases the desired outcome (i.e. regular monitoring of the absence of disease) can be achieved in a less strict way. In particular, where no other specific risk factors occur in the herd/flock or region in question.

Therefore, I would like to invite you to temporarily apply a certain level of discretion for frequencies of sampling and in some cases testing of lower risk populations, in those cases where the results of the tests are not to be used for movements of those animals that need to be certified by a certifying officer after veterinary inspection, since this would represent an unacceptable risk.

At the same time, no delay or failure to comply with the mandatory testing frequencies can be accepted, when the tests are performed in order to make use of the possible derogations for the dispatch of animals, animal products or products of animal origin in the context of preventive measures adopted under Council Directive 89/662/EEC or Council Directive 90/425/EEC (e.g. for ASF, HPAI, CSF, LSD).

I hope that on this basis, workable solutions can be found in all Member States, using as much as possible knowledge about risks available at local level.

My colleagues and I stand ready to provide further guidance and support in this context.

Yours sincerely,

E-signed

Bernard Van Goethem

c.c.: Permanent Representations of the EU Member States, DG AGRI

Chief Veterinary Officers of Member States