

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: New FMD Strain Discovered in Turkiye

Country: Turkey

Post: Ankara

Report Category: Agricultural Situation, Agriculture in the News, Livestock and Products

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Report Highlights:

In March, the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry (MinAF) detected for the first time an SAT-2 strain of foot and mouth disease (FMD) in cattle. The cases are located in the eastern half of Türkiye, though media reports suggest there may be additional cases in other parts of the country. In response to the detection, the Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry (MinAF) has instituted various measures to halt the spread of the virus. The Turkish livestock industry is worried that the virus will impact meat and milk yields, thereby driving retail prices for these products even higher.

New FMD Strain, Another Blow to Turkish Livestock Industry

In March, the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry (MinAF) notified the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) that it had detected for the first time an SAT-2 strain of foot and mouth disease (FMD) in cattle. Based on the WOAH notice, the virus has been reported in cattle from cities (Agri, Kars and Elazig) located in the eastern half of Türkiye. Media reports suggest that there may be additional cases in other regions of the country which have not yet been notified to WOAH. The Ministry believes this virus originated from an uncontrolled movement of animals from Iraq into Türkiye.

To halt the spread of this FMD virus, MinAF has instituted various measures including quarantine, traceability, vaccination, movement controls, and disinfection procedures. MinAF has dispatched teams of veterinarians and technicians to help implement these various measures, as needed. In addition, under MinAF's orders, animal markets have been closed and the movement of FMD-susceptible animals has been restricted across the country. Exemption from these movement controls only apply to animals sent directly to slaughterhouses for processing, or those animals designated for official export or import channels.

The Ministry announced in early March that it had developed a vaccine against the SAT-2 serotype and would immediately begin vaccinating susceptible animals. According to livestock producers, it is critical to complete this vaccination campaign and resume the movement of animals ahead of the Islamic holiday, the Feast of Sacrifice (Eid al-Adha). Otherwise, there is concern that the virus could spread further, and cause the livestock industry to suffer even greater financial losses.

Turkish livestock producers worry that this FMD serotype will seriously affect meat and milk yields, which will continue to put upward pressure on already high retail prices for these items. The detection of this new FMD strain comes at a time when the country's livestock industry is reeling from the effects of the devastating earthquakes as well as tough economic conditions that forced many farmers to prematurely liquidate their livestock inventories.

FMD Comes with the Territory

Türkiye has dealt with FMD cases in the past and has struggled to completely eradicate the virus, given the intensive movements of livestock inside the country and unofficial movements from neighboring countries to the south and east. These cases have resulted in significant economic losses. In addition to the latest strain (SAT-2), Türkiye has previously reported findings of A, O, C, SAT-1, and Asia-1 FMD viruses.

Thrace Region Remains Free of FMD

Since 2010, the Thrace region is considered FMD-free with vaccination. This status enables the region, which is home to a sizeable dairy industry, to ship dairy products to the European Union. Strict quarantine and testing controls are in place for animals entering Thrace to preserve this status.

Attachments:

No Attachments.