

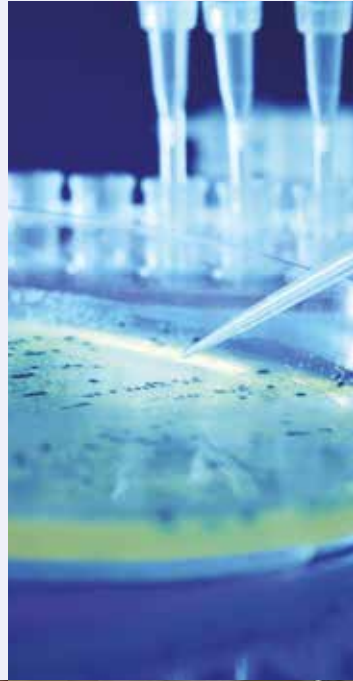


**MINISTÈRE  
DE L'AGRICULTURE  
ET DE L'ALIMENTATION**

*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*

# Activity Report 2019

**French General Directorate for Food  
(DGAL)**





# EDITORIAL



It is always an instructive exercise to look back over the year just ended to assess the ground covered and clarify the significance of what has been done once we are no longer in the heat of the action.

Reading through the pages of this Activity Report, you will discover the main areas in which the DGAL was active in 2019 and the results it has obtained. As you will see, this has been a rich, intense and lively year.

Firstly, there were several reasons for satisfaction. France remained free of African swine fever and pine wood nematode, to point to just two examples in animal and plant health. Application of the

EGALim law saw major progress in terms of its phytosanitary and animal welfare aspects, as well as improvements in canteen meals and efforts to combat food waste.

Our activity has not been spared its crises: the Lubrizol fire in Rouen, the bark beetle crisis in eastern France, numerous plant health alerts, among others. On each occasion the DGAL's teams were able to step up to the mark. Just as they did in getting organised in the run-up to Brexit, the impact of which in terms of sanitary border controls will be major.

In a globalised world disrupted by climate change, biosecurity and prevention are more essential than ever. The agricultural and food industries know that good sanitary performance has today become a condition to be met for good economic performance.

It is in that spirit, strengthened by the Covid-19 crisis, that the DGAL intends to continue its action to serve the citizens and sanitary security of our country.

Happy reading!

**Bruno FERREIRA**  
Director General  
for Food



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## FOOD INSPECTION SERVICES

The General Directorate for Food (*Direction générale de l'alimentation* – DGAL) is active in ensuring the safety and quality of food- and feedstuffs at every point in the food chain, in addition to the health and protection of animals and plants, liaising with the different actors involved: agricultural professionals, consumers,

veterinarians and non-profit associations. It drafts regulations relating to its official tasks and its offices out in France's *départements* and regions verify compliance with them. At the European and international levels, it promotes France's food, sanitary and phytosanitary models.

## ASSIGNED TASKS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT OF FOOD-RELATED RISKS

To protect the health of consumers, animals, plants and the environment



by defining and verifying the sanitary conditions in which animal and plant products are to be produced and brought to market or into our territory



## THE DGAL PERFORMS ITS ASSIGNED TASKS USING

APPLICABLE EU AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS IT HELPS DRAFT AND IMPLEMENT

VETERINARY & PHYTOSANITARY PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICES IT COORDINATES IN FRANCE'S DÉPARTEMENTS AND REGIONS

THE DGAL'S CORE TASKS ALSO INCLUDE THE COORDINATION OF FOOD POLICY, IN ADDITION TO INTERMINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL FOOD PROGRAMME (PNA).

### Applying a holistic approach, the DGAL

ANTICIPATES RISKS AND ASSESSES THEM BASED ON SCIENTIFIC EVALUATION

IMPLEMENTS APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO MANAGE THOSE RISKS

THE SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS UNDER DGAL MANAGEMENT ENABLE IT TO TAKE PREVENTIVE STEPS.

INTEGRATED, HORIZONTAL RISK MANAGEMENT CALLS UPON A RANGE OF TECHNICAL, SCIENTIFIC AND ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS.

### Faced with

MAJOR EXPANSION IN GLOBAL TRADE

A more international, holistic vision of health risks.

EMERGENCE OF NEW PATHOGENS FOR HUMANS, ANIMALS AND PLANTS

Provision of guarantees to consumers.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Transparent communication on risk.

# SAFE, HIGH-QUALITY FOOD FOR ALL

One of the core tasks of the DGAL is to ensure the food safety for health and quality. To that end, it deploys inspectors in the decentralised agencies to verify the entire food chain, alongside a series of partners, in order to implement its food policy. 2019 was an intense year marked by the drafting of the new National Food Programme (PNA) in line with the provisions of “EGAlim” (France’s agriculture and food law), improvements to the system of verification, and not forgetting the handling of several sanitary crises.

## FRANCE’S NEW FOOD PROGRAMME (PNA) 2019-2023: ACTION IN THE REGIONS

The new PNA launched in September 2019 sets a direction for the Ministry of Agriculture’s food policy for the next five years. Its goal is to make use of the dynamics and actors at local level and institutional catering to promote higher quality food.

PNA 3 retains the **three main pillars** of previous programmes, these being social justice, combating food waste and food education. It also sets out to use **two horizontal levers for transition** to food that is safer, healthy, sustainable and accessible to all: local regional food projects and institutional catering.

Input for the building of the new plan came notably from the focuses contained in the roadmap from the French National Food Conference, the provisions of the EGAlim law and the views



expressed by the National Food Council (CNA).

This third version, under the heading “**Action in Local Regions**” sets out to make use of the **dynamics and actors at local level** to demonstrate that while the PNA defines an overall framework, practical action will come from the local level in the form of projects suited to local contexts.

Where social justice is concerned, one of the ultimate goals of PNA3, alongside the National Health and Nutrition Programme (PNNS4), is to **promote dietary choices** beneficial to health and protective of the environment while at the same time reducing inequality in access to sustainable, high quality food.

**Food education for the very young remains a priority**, and notably involves ongoing work with the Ministry of Education to develop dedicated teaching resources.

The combat against food waste has been intensified by the EGALim law and the legislation against waste and for the circular economy. This whole legislative and regulatory framework will be rolled out through the PNA, bringing on board those involved in the Pact Against Food Waste (*Pacte de lutte contre le gaspillage alimentaire*).



## Two levers to speed the agroecological transition in food production systems

**The first is institutional catering.** The EGALim law defines a strong goal for improvements here, aiming to ensure that in the catering services of public-sector facilities **50% procurement of sustainable, high-quality products, including at least 20% organic, will be achieved by 2022.** This commitment by the President of the Republic, henceforth enshrined in law, will help generate leverage for an overhaul of food supply in local regions, and develop more substantial market supply of sustainable, high-quality products.

The PNA's second horizontal lever is the development of **local regional food projects**, these being impressive tools for the development of **a holistic approach to the food system across a whole local area.** The PNA aims to increase support for their emergence and development.

## THE NATIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION PROGRAMME (PNAN)

announced by the Prime Minister in April 2019 sets a direction for the government's food and nutrition policy over the next five years.

Driven by the Ministries of Food and Health, the PNAN brings together for the first time the actions in the National Food Programme (PNA3) and the National Nutrition and Health Programme (PNNS4), which adopt an integrated approach to the roll-out of government food and nutrition policy.

The objective of this programme, in line with the National Food Conference and the National Health Strategy, is to promote dietary choices beneficial to health and protective of the environment while also reducing inequality in access to sustainable, high-quality food.

Against the backdrop of strong societal expectations, the PNAN will be one of the drivers for transition in agriculture and food.



## INSTITUTIONAL CATERING

### MEASURES FOR HIGH-QUALITY, SUSTAINABLE FOOD

The principal measure for this sector in the EGALim law lays down a target for procurement to be met by 2022: at least 50% products are to be sustainable or covered by an official quality label – e.g. PDO, PGI or Label Rouge – of which at least 20% is to come from organic farming.

This applies to all canteens and institutional food outlets in the public sector and private-sector school and university canteens, medical, social and prison facilities, etc. with the exception of corporate restaurants in private enterprises.

This flagship measure goes hand in hand with consumer information

programmes: since 1 January 2020, canteen patrons must be informed once a year of the composition of the meals and the quality of the products served.

The EGALim law also brings in provisions for the diversification of protein intake: managers of canteens (over 200 covers a day) must build protein diversification plans for the meals they offer and, under a two-year trial, as of 1 November 2019 school canteen managers have had to propose a weekly vegetarian meal.

In addition, in 2025 a ban will be imposed on plastic containers for cooking, reheating or serving food in local institutional catering.

Finally, the EGALim law has taken efforts to control food waste one step further by:

- banning plastic water containers, stirrers and straws in school canteens from 2020,
- extending to institutional catering and the agrifood industries, above defined thresholds, an obligation to offer agreements for the donation of excess foodstuffs to approved charities (ordinance of 21 October 2019),
- extending the roll-out of a programme against food waste to include private catering facilities (ordinance of 21 October 2019).



## Prevention of the sanitary risks linked to raw milk cheeses

Cases of haemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS) linked to consumption of cheeses made from raw milk (more than thirty or so in less than a year) confirm the particular vulnerability to this of young children, for whom the consequences can be dramatic: ongoing kidney or neurological issues, or even death. The taste qualities of this category of product must under no circumstances blind us to the health risk for young children.

The health authorities have therefore reminded the public that consumption of raw milk may present a major risk of bacterial infection in children, especially the under-5s. **These products must therefore not be consumed by children less than five**

**years of age under any circumstances.**

This specific risk declines with age up to 15, when, according to scientific data, it converges with the normal level.

For the under-5s, preference should be given to pressed, cooked cheeses (Emmental or Comté, for example), processed cheese spreads and pasteurised milk cheese. The same recommendation should be followed by pregnant women, immunosuppressed individuals and the elderly. These guidelines are based on scientific evidence, studies conducted by the French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES) and data from Santé Publique France.

Work has also been done with the industry to harmonise public information on prevention of this risk. Although good practice in husbandry, dairy parlour hygiene and the manufacture of raw milk cheeses help reduce the risk of contamination, it is not possible to give a complete guarantee that consumers will not be exposed to these pathogens when consuming raw milk and raw milk products.

The food chain surveillance platform set up in 2018 has begun to look at this issue, forming a working group seeking to ensure more effective sharing of information among all those involved in the dairy industry with regard to surveillance of this hazard.

## TRANSMISSION OF SANITARY INFORMATION

### NEW OBLIGATIONS FOR INDUSTRY

Since the entry into force of the EGAlim law in October 2018, the obligation for food chain operators to declare unfavourable self-inspection results has been extended in the interests of enhanced food safety.

Previously, all self-inspection results obtained for a product (both food and feed) placed on the market were to be notified without delay to the authorities.

The EGAlim (Art. 50) extends this obligation to declare to cover unfavourable self-inspection results for products not yet brought to market as well as undesirable results obtained in the production setting (e.g. premises and equipment), insofar as they support a conclusion that the products may possibly be harmful to human and/or animal health.

Such declarations are not limited to transmission of raw data; they must also include a risk analysis by the company and details of the planned remedial steps.

Lastly, the EGAlim law also strengthens the obligations to communicate test results imposed on laboratories when requested by inspection agencies.



## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

### FOOD AI FOR BETTER INSPECTION TARGETING

**Since November 2019, Ministry of Agriculture inspectors have been able to use “Food AI” (IALim) to assist them in targeting their restaurant health inspections more effectively.**

The project, under the French acronym “IALim”, is a decision aid for better targeting of sanitary checks on the restaurants identified as most at risk based on analysis of comments and grades posted by consumers on digital platforms such as TripAdvisor and Google.

In November 2018, the DGAL was selected following the first call for declarations of interest in a trial of artificial intelligence in public services launched by the Secretary of State for Digital Affairs.

IALim can help improve the protection of consumer health and is part of a programme to promote

public participation in government action. Its use remains optional as an application capable of providing useful input for inspectors’ analysis when deciding which establishments to inspect.

Based on data acquired through these platforms (over 10 million comments taken into account) and historical results for past inspections, a predictive algorithm for levels of establishment non-compliance has been developed to build lists of outlets identified as most at risk.

In a later stage it will be possible to add new data to the algorithmic model in order to enhance its performance.



## MANAGEMENT OF A CHEMICAL RISK

### THE LUBRIZOL FACTORY FIRE

**The DGAL was in the front line in the handling of the crisis that followed the fire at Lubrizol's factory in Rouen on 26 September last. Key to its action: dealing with the health risks linked to agricultural production and food.**

Exceptional events demand exceptional measures. The DGAL's teams were extremely active in managing the crisis that occurred on 26 September in Rouen. For four weeks the DGAL led and maintained an exclusively dedicated crisis centre (eight staff) that proved capable of rapidly defining and focusing sanitary measures on agriculture and food.

Given the absence of any information on the nature of the products

that were going up in smoke, the most urgent need was to put an end to possible consumer exposure to a potential risk of chemical contamination. As a precaution it was therefore necessary to block all sales of the most sensitive agricultural produce.

Next, the hazard for consumers needed to be characterised: the DGAL worked on a plan for checks with the necessary testing to be carried out by the laboratory of reference (Laberca in Nantes) in order to verify the compliance of agricultural products. Another critical issue: compensation for farmers and growers, which was given urgent consideration, leading to proposals from the Ministry.

The DGAL's crisis centre took part in the daily meetings of the inter-ministerial support unit. It was in constant contact with the inter-branch representation bodies in order to respond to their many requests. ANSES, as the preferred interlocutor, had a decisive role given its expertise. Government

briefings provided the public with regular updates on the situation in the affected area and the steps taken by the relevant authorities.

All in all, several draft official orders and technical instructions were produced in order to organise the work of the decentralised offices, which played a very major role, most notably the Regional Food and Agriculture Directorates (DRAAFs) for Normandy and Hauts de France and the departmental authority for Seine-Maritime, as well as its counterparts in the Aisne, Nord, Oise and Somme *départements*.

Now that the initial emergency is over, long-term surveillance is ongoing in conjunction with ANSES. The aim of this is to observe whether there is a tendency over time for contaminants to accumulate in soil, crops or livestock.



# PREVENTING ANIMAL DISEASES AND PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

**Preventing disease on livestock farms requires effective biosecurity measures. Promoting animal welfare also helps reduce infections and the use of veterinary medicines, antibiotics in particular.**

**The DGAL actively supports the strengthening of such sustainable practices not only for livestock farms, but also for pets.**



## **BIOSECURITY TO IMPROVE LIVESTOCK FARM HEALTH**

**France is free of African swine fever. Retention of its disease-free status is due to efforts made by all those involved and especially government agencies (DD (ec)PP, DDT and DRAAF Grand Est). The strategy adopted has three pillars: prevention, surveillance and preparation for controlling outbreaks.**

Following the detection of **African swine fever (ASF)** in Belgium in September 2018, a sanitary shield was put in place to bar entry of the virus into France.

Restrictions on activities such as hunting, work and recreation in forest areas, reinforcement of biosecurity measures on pig farms and during transportation of pigs, surveillance of farms and wild fauna and a campaign to raise the awareness of livestock professionals and hunters, in addition to travellers, made it possible to avoid penetration of the virus into our country.

In 2019, those measures were supplemented by wild boar depopulation in high-risk areas and the installation of over 130km of wire fencing. The situation is evolving positively in Belgium but remains a cause for concern in central and eastern Europe as well as in Asia. The risk of arrival of the virus from other countries remains high. Vigilance therefore needs to be maintained.

If France, which exports 40% of its production, loses its disease-free status for African swine fever, this would have major economic consequences for the industry. Negotiations are ongoing with the European Commission for the recognition of “disease-free zoning” by third country pigmeat importers. The aim of this would be to allow a country affected by the disease to continue exporting from geographical areas still free of the disease.

In 2001 France was officially declared to be free of **bovine tuberculosis**. Nevertheless, the disease has not been totally eradicated. The most recent tuberculosis prophylaxis campaign (2018-2019) involved the tuberculin testing of 850,000 cattle in over 15,000 herds. The situation has improved compared with 2018



(123 outbreaks) with 92 livestock farms declared infected in 2019. The disease is also present in wild fauna (wild boar, stags and badgers), making its eradication more problematic.

Tuberculosis is the focus of an enhanced action plan combining measures on surveillance, biosecurity and efforts to eradicate persistent disease clusters. The tuberculosis steering committee meeting in September 2019 with the members of the French National Council for the Orientation of Animal and Plant Sanitary Policy (CNOPSAV) highlighted the problems identified for farm surveillance, biosecurity measures to be implemented and the situation with regard to wild fauna.

Vigilance continues to be needed on **highly pathogenic avian influenza**, which hit poultry farms in 2015-2016 and 2016-2017. Cases and outbreaks on farms detected in late 2019 and early 2020 in Eastern Europe and Germany are a reminder to us to abide by biosecurity rules on livestock farms and during the transportation of poultry. France is now free of highly pathogenic avian influenza.



## ANIMAL WELFARE

### MORE PROTECTIVE PRACTICES ON LIVESTOCK FARMS AND FOR PETS

**The welfare of livestock on farms and animals kept as pets has become an important issue for the government. In early 2020 the Ministry of Agriculture and Food announced 15 measures aimed at strengthening controls on the maltreatment of animals. Animal welfare is beneficial for farm competitiveness and contributes to the development of agroecology.**

The DGAL was particularly active in 2019 in preparing a series of measures aimed at responding to societal demands and ending certain painful techniques in order to improve animal welfare on farms. An official ministerial order banning the castration of piglets without anaesthesia by the end of 2021 was published on 24 February 2020. An end to the maceration of chicks was also announced following the meeting of Minister Didier Guillaume with German Minister Julia Klockner in January 2020 in Berlin.

More generally, a decree is to be tabled in the Conseil d'État looking to prohibit all pain-causing practices on livestock farms and imposing the designation of an animal welfare referent on every farm.

## Restrictions on livestock transportation during heat waves

In July 2019, the Ministry decided to suspend by official order the transportation by road of live animals **in heat waves during the hottest periods in the day**. For journeys of long duration (over eight hours) authorisation is given only to transportation guaranteeing temperatures under 30°C. Verifications of compliance with these provisions have been stepped up.

Generally speaking, transportation conditions have improved and the penalties will be broadened for failure to abide by the regulations.

### Pets

Lastly, steps have been taken to combat the abandonment of pets and to make their owners accountable. In the very near future, a regulatory instrument will lay down penalties for failure to place identification on cats, as is required for dogs. Going further, in late December 2019 the Prime Minister tasked member of parliament Loïc Dombrevail on this subject. His proposals are expected by the end of the first half of 2020.



### IN BRIEF

## ABATTOIRS: THE LAUNCH OF TWO TRIAL PROGRAMMES

The EGALim law provided for the setting up of a **trial of CCTV supervision in abattoirs** on a voluntary basis: the objective of this programme is to assess the impact of the system as a verification tool for use by the industry to check on adherence to animal protection rules at the point of slaughter. A monitoring committee for the trial has been formed. This is composed of all stakeholders declaring an interest in the topic: agricultural representative organisations, animal protection non-profits and technical institutes.

Several abattoirs have already submitted applications. The

evaluation is expected to be finalised in April 2021.

**The EGALim law also provides for a four-year trial of mobile abattoir units.** More precisely, this involves an evaluation to identify the impact on animal welfare and the economic viability of such systems. An evaluation commission is currently being set up. However, to date only one application for approval of a mobile abattoir has been submitted and is currently under consideration.

## IN BRIEF

### THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON ABATTOIR ETHICS IS NOW A PERMANENT BODY

The National Committee on Abattoir Ethics (CNEAb) is a National Food Council consultation group. It has organised discussions between the industry, animal protection associations, veterinarians, faith representatives and researchers (sociologists, legal experts, philosophers, etc.) to arrive at an analysis of what society expects and to give an opinion on public policy and improvements in animal protection in the abattoir setting.

Following an initial opinion issued in February 2019, the CNEAb was made permanent in May 2019. Its consideration of the issues will provide input for the Ministry's policy on this topic.



To find out more : <https://www.cna-alimentation.fr>

### BIOSECURITY AND ANIMAL WELFARE TO COMBAT ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

**Antimicrobial resistance is the phenomenon that makes antibiotics ineffective against bacteria. This leaves doctors and veterinarians without medicines to treat people and animals. Biosecurity, vaccination and animal welfare allow disease to be prevented, thereby reducing the use of antibiotics. This will enable us to keep them effective.**

An interministerial roadmap for controlling antimicrobial resistance was launched in November 2016.

The involvement of livestock farmers, pet owners, veterinarians and all the actors in the livestock sanitary domain has yielded good results (-39% over six years) with **the two Ecoantibio Plans: 2012-2016 and 2017-2021** implemented by the DGAL.

Those efforts have continued into 2019. The network of referent veterinarians for antibiotic therapy set up in 2017 has been extended to cover the whole country. This network disseminates good practice for reasonable antibiotic usage to practicing veterinarians.

Every year since 2013 approximately €2 million has been devoted



to projects for action or research. The 2019 call for project proposals took the number of funded projects above the 200 mark. Some are conducted by the industry, such as the creation of the BâtiSanté Guide developed by the French institute for the pig and pork industry (IFIP) and research programmes.

In September 2019, a new information campaign was launched with livestock farmers and veterinarians in mind, the aim being to ensure all concerned remained involved: "Antibiotics: As needed – When needed".

**Two new EU regulations in January 2019** on veterinary medicines and medicated feed in the negotiations for which the French authorities were active participants, will help achieve the goals of Ecoantibio: greater stringency for the application procedure for authorisation to place an antibiotic on the market, collection of data on antibiotic sales and use, a ban on prophylaxis, strict constraints on "meta-phylaxis" (combined cu-



rative and preventive use of antibiotics), and a ban on exports of products of animal origin treated with antibiotics used as growth promoters or antibiotics reserved for human medicine from third countries to the European Union.

## MAINTAINING LOCAL, HIGH- QUALITY PROVISION OF VETERINARY SERVICES

**The profession of veterinarian practicing in rural communities is suffering from a crisis in recruitment. Not because of any fall in numbers of veterinarians in France, but due to young graduates' lack of interest in rural practice and a decline in livestock farming in some regions. This lack of veterinarians in rural areas is endangering farm health and is also a public health issue.**

Since 2017, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food has been working with the farming and veterinary professions under a “roadmap for retention of veterinarians in livestock farming and rural areas”. A number of programmes have already been initiated, such as the annual publication by the National Order of Veterinarians of a demographic atlas of the veterinary profession and the system of mentored internships in the 5th year of veterinary studies, encouraging veterinary students to consider a career in livestock production.

2019 was a year marked by reform of higher veterinary education, notably involving changes in procedures for recruitment by the national schools. 2019 also featured the tabling of a report by the General Council on Agriculture, Food and Rural Spaces (CGAER)

on lessons learned regarding veterinarians' take-up of, and continuation in such careers in several EU countries. The Ministry acted to place the issues relating to veterinary service coverage on the "Rural Agenda" driven by the Ministry for Territorial Cohesion and Relations with Local Authorities. Local authorities will therefore need to adopt incentive measures to encourage veterinarians to open practices in areas where care provision is inadequate.

Consultations between representative agricultural and veterinary organisations have been ongoing.

2020 promises substantive progress on a number of programmes: contractualisation, with mutual consent between farmers and veterinarians on the sharing of sanitary data, video consultations, delegation of veterinary procedures to non-veterinarians and the involvement of local authorities in setting up and retaining veterinary practices in local areas. All these points will be covered in a roadmap to be updated and focused on those actions deemed to be high-priority.



# PLANTS UNDER SURVEILLANCE, PROTECTION TO BE REVISITED

A priority for the DGAL in recent years has been to provide responses to the public's legitimate expectations. Where plants are concerned, those expectations focus particularly on reductions in the use of plant protection products and the associated potential risks to health and the environment.

2019 saw progress in this area. The year was also devoted to the preparation of the entry into force of the EU regulation on plant health and surveillance of sanitary hazards: continuation of the combat against the *Xylella fastidiosa* bacterium, prevention of outbreaks of pine wood nematode, and monitoring the spread of bark beetles (parasitic insects) on spruces.

Preventing these diseases will contribute to the agroecological transition in our farm and food production.



# PRIORITISATION OF PREVENTION AND SURVEILLANCE

## HARMFUL ORGANISMS: ENHANCED PROTECTION FOR THE EU

A new EU regulation on plant health came into force on 14 December 2019. Its objective is to enhance the protection of European Union's territory against the entry and spread of organisms harmful to plants. It lays down common rules within the EU and applies both to private individuals and industry.

The new regulation provides for:

- a new EU classification of harmful organisms based on level of risk: this will enable the means used for control to be matched to the level of phytosanitary risk;
- a prevention strategy for imports with provisions of greater or lesser stringency depending on level of risk, up to and including an import ban;
- accountability for industry operators and for private individuals and travellers;
- Henceforth, all plants brought into the European Union, with a few exceptions, must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate;

- reinforcement and extension of the system for issuance of phytosanitary passports for trade flows within the European Union: this will guarantee that plants are free of regulated harmful organisms;
- enhanced annual surveillance by each Member State to guarantee the absence of, or to prevent the spread of more than 200 organisms harmful to plants and classified as requiring "quarantine"

across the European Union.



More information :

<https://agriculture.gouv.fr/sante-des-vegetaux-un-nouveau-cadre-reglementaire-evolution-des-obligations-pour-les-professionnels>

## A MORE PROTECTIVE PREVENTION STRATEGY FOR EUROPEAN PRODUCTION

The prevention strategy for imports adopted by the European Union represents very real progress for the protection of EU territory. The new regulation introduces a comprehensive system for graduated prevention based on the level of risk associated with the various types of imports into the EU.

Until now, only certain plants and plant products needed to be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate and meet specific requirements. With this new regulation, the phytosanitary certificate becomes mandatory for all imports of plants or parts of living plants.

Only certain fruit (pineapple, coconut, banana, durian and dates) may be imported into EU territory without a phytosanitary certificate.

The European Commission can continue to ban imports of certain plants and plant products from designated third countries where they present an unacceptable risk of introduction of so-called "quarantine" harmful organisms. It has in fact introduced a list of "high risk plants" import of which is prohibited until an analysis of the phytosanitary risk has been completed.

## PLANT HEALTH: FRANCE'S OVERSEAS TERRITORIES

With the entry into force of the new regulation, France's Overseas Départements and Regions (DROM), given their geographical location and climatic specificities, are now no longer included in the European Union phytosanitary area.

Plants brought into Metropolitan France from France's overseas territories are subject to the same requirements as those arriving from a country not in the European Union (i.e. third countries). They must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate, with the excep-

tion of pineapple, banana, durian, dates and coconut, these being judged to be free of risk and consequently exempt from controls.

The DGAL has assisted the Food, Agriculture and Forest Directorates (DAAF), responsible for issuing the certificates, in applying the new regulatory provisions.

Electronic certification using the EU's TRACES computer interface has been selected in order to facilitate these controls.

The officers on the ground have all been trained and authorised by the European Commission to carry out electronic certification, which will facilitate and simplify shipping formalities for producers and postal operators in the regions concerned. Additional training courses, notably for export certification, will be held in the first half of 2020. Information campaigns have also been conducted at local level and the main actors (producers, shippers, carriers, etc.) have been informed.

## PROTECTING THE SANITARY STATUS AND COMPLIANCE OF OUR PLANTS

### THE SPRUCE BARK BEETLE EPIDEMIC WORSENS

**The exceptionally dry year in 2018, coupled with abnormally high temperatures over long periods, had major consequences for forest trees in 2019.**

An initial sanitary crisis occurred in 2018 as bark beetle populations (insects parasitic on trees) expanded dramatically over a period of four years in north-eastern France. 2019 was marked by a worsening of the bark beetle epidemic in spruce stands in eastern France and Burgundy Franche-Comté.

Episodes of drought and hot weather throughout 2019 led both to a weakening of the

trees and an acceleration of the insect development cycle.

The volume of spruce wood that has been damaged is now estimated at 7m cu. m. for 2018 and 2019. While seeking to halt the spread of the infestation through early detection of bark beetle outbreaks, sanitary felling has been carried out in the affected stands under prefectoral orders. The DGAL issues recommendations for the outbreak management and continues to monitor the expansion of the epidemic.





## **PINE WOOD NEMATODE: AN EMERGENCY PLAN TO COMBAT A HIGH-PRIORITY HAZARD**

**The National Emergency Sanitary Intervention Plan (PNISU) to control the pine wood nematode was published in March 2019. This emergency plan is activated when an outbreak of pine wood nematode is discovered in a tree. This microscopic worm blocks sap circulation in conifers and can cause the tree to die in the space of 45 days. It is a high-priority “quarantine” pest.**

The objective of the PNISU is to prepare government agencies to take protective steps when disease is suspected, followed by the application of control measures if an outbreak is confirmed.

Live pine wood nematodes have been identified on a number of occasions in recent months, initially on bark arriving from Portugal in 2018, and later on wood packing from Portuguese, Chinese and indeterminate sources in 2018 and 2019. None has yet been detected on trees in the natural setting, nor on vector insects. On each occasion the DGAL has ordered the destruction of the contaminated products.

Surveillance has been stepped up on bags of bark chips and wood pallets and packing. ANSES, asked to assess the risk of introduction and spread of the pine wood nematodes via materials of this kind, issued its opinion in July 2019, detailing the products presenting a

risk. In 2020 the surveillance implemented by the teams in the decentralised departments will focus on these high-risk products.

No tree, either standing or felled, has been identified as contaminated. This means that France remains free of pine wood nematode.

The pine wood nematode came originally from North America and spread in Asia before reaching Europe. It has been present in Portugal since 1999 and is currently contained there, and in Spain since 2008, where it is in the process of being eradicated.



## **XYLELLA FASTIDIOSA: SURVEILLANCE CONTINUED**

**Maintaining vigilance and tight surveillance has enabled the spread of the contamination to be circumscribed, protecting vulnerable cultivated species. The main solution: stopping movement of plants out of and into contaminated areas.**

Since the beginning of the crisis in 2015, absent any treatment, enhanced surveillance has been implemented to avoid the spread of the bacterium. Nearly 47,500 plant samples have been taken and tested across the country, 2.8% of which have been found to be infected.

In 2019, surveillance led to the discovery of additional cases of contamination located in or near

the infected areas in Corsica and the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (PACA) region. Almost 14,000 inspections were performed by DRAAF teams across the geographical areas free of the bacterium, including 8,000 inspections in vineyards and 2,600 in plant nurseries.

In the summer of 2019, for the first time in France, two infected olive trees were discovered in the course of surveillance of outbreaks in Antibes and Menton. They were grubbed up and surveillance and control measures were applied to the outbreaks. National surveillance was also stepped up at ports with the inspection of ships leaving Corsica.

The bacterium *Xylella fastidiosa*, which was detected for the first time in France in 2015, and which can attack over 200 species, is the target of mandatory control efforts under EU and French regulations. Given its harmfulness and polyphagous character, this bacterium is also classed by the

European Union as a high-priority quarantine pest. In France, only the two aforementioned regions are affected. No infection has as yet been discovered in cultivation settings (e.g. orchards, nurseries).

### **IN BRIEF**

#### **Plane trees endangered by a harmful fungus**

Arriving in France during the Second World War, plane tree wilt is caused by a harmful fungus whose introduction and distribution are banned under French and EU regulations currently in force. It is the focus of mandatory control measures across the whole of the European Union. There is no curative treatment at the present time, which means that control must be based on surveillance and prevention, based most notably on the culling of affected trees.

In 2019, two new clusters were discovered in regions hitherto free of the disease: Pays-de-la-Loire (Loire Valley) and Île-de-France (Greater Paris). Epidemiological investigations are ongoing but the most likely hypothesis is that the fungus has been spread by public works activities (on contaminated tools and machinery) in the affected municipalities.

## Grubbing up GMO oilseed rape

Traces of GMO have been detected in three batches of oilseed rape marketed in France. The GMO detected was glyphosate-tolerant GT73 oilseed rape from seed stock produced in Argentina. This is authorised in the EU for human and animal food and feed but banned as a crop. Bags of unsown seeds were recalled and destroyed but some had already been sown in the autumn of 2018. The Ministry of Agriculture asked the distributing company to arrange for the destruction of the relevant crops (over 20,000 hectares) and the application of management and monitoring measures for the parcels to prevent possible spread linked to ungerminated seeds in the soil. This destruction was officially verified by the relevant regional offices (DRAAFs).



## PROMOTING THE AGROECOLOGICAL TRANSITION



### REDUCING THE USE OF PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS: PATCHY RESULTS

For around a decade the Ecophyto plan, led by the DGAL in conjunction with three other ministries (Ecology, Research and Health) has sought to reduce the use of plant protection products and the risks for the public and the environment. What is at issue is the need to put agriculture on a path to an agroecological transition, while at the same time reconciling this change with good economic performance. Considerable progress was made in 2019: the launch of Ecophyto 2+ and the publication of several instruments deriving from the EGAlim law (to constrain advertising and facilitate the marketing of natural alternatives, for example).

A sharp increase was observed in the quantities of plant protection products sold in 2018, which can be put down in part to advance purchases at the end of the year in anticipation of the increase in the diffuse pollution tax from 1 January 2019. The number and quantities of the substances of greatest concern are nevertheless declining year on year: 38 substances of concern were withdrawn from sale across the EU in 2018 and 2019. In addition, France has decided to order the withdrawal of products based on metam sodium, epoxiconazole and substances whose mode of action is identical to that of neonicotinoids. Sale quantities of the substances of greatest concern also declined (-15% for CMR 1 and -9% for CMR 2) between 2009-2011 and 2016-2018.

Moreover, the quantities of biocontrol products being used is increasing, as is the commitment of farmers to approaches acknowledged to be economic in the use of plant protection products (organic farming and farming classed as having “high environmental value” – HVE).

At the most recent meeting of the Ecophyto Plan’s Strategic Orientation and Monitoring Committee (COS) in January 2020, ministers tasked ANSES, the National Institute for Agricultural, Food and Environmental Research (INRAE) and the French Office for Biodiversity (OFB) with forming a scientific and technical committee attached to the COS to provide robust interpretation of monitoring indicators, as well as evaluating all or part of the plan, in addition to potentially proposing changes aimed at strengthening policy for reduced use of plant protection products.



More information at:  
<https://agriculture.gouv.fr/ecophyto>

## IN BRIEF

### Towards an exit from glyphosate

**A task force was set up early in 2019 to roll out the actions contained in the glyphosate exit plan. This aims to put an end to glyphosate’s principal uses by the end of 2020, and to all usage no later than the end of 2022.**

The task force is chaired by Perfect Pierre-Etienne Bisch as inter-ministerial coordinator and brings together a range of actors, most notably representatives of the industry and civil society.

Among the actions undertaken for the assistance of farmers is the creation of a web-based resource centre integrated into the EcophytoPIC portal at the beginning of 2019. This offers presentations of successful personal experience and provides farmers with access to existing technical solutions for the abandonment of glyphosate without resorting to chemicals. A government start-up was launched in May 2019 to help farmers put these good practices in place.

Trials of alternatives to glyphosate for the major field crops, winegrowing and soil conservation agriculture have also been given funding of nearly one million euros.



more information at:  
[www.glyphosate.gouv.fr](http://www.glyphosate.gouv.fr) and at  
<http://ecophytopic.fr/centre-de-res-sources-glyphosate>

### Separating sales from advice to guarantee independence

**Deriving from the “EGALim” farming and food law, the ordinance published in April 2019 following a public consultation process provides for separation of plant protection product sale and application activities from usage advisory services.**

The goal is to avoid the risk of conflicts of interests for operators who combine these activities. The aim is also to steer advice toward the promotion of alternatives and to support farmers in the transition to agroecology.

Renewal of the Certiphyto held by professional users will be conditional on the provision by an independent adviser of “strategic advice” at least twice in five years. The ordinance comes into force on 1 January 2021 and its implementing instruments are in the process of finalisation.



### Greater protection for local inhabitants: safety distances

**Following a public consultation process initiated in September 2019, the government has finalised the new system applicable from 1 January 2020 to provide more protection to local inhabitants during application of plant production products.**

Users of plant protection products are encouraged to draw up formal charters of good practice in conjunction with local residents and their representatives. Such charters, which need approval from département Prefects, must notably include a procedure for informing those living nearby along with protective measures. This involves a safety distance of 20 metres during use of the products of most concern and 5 metres (ground crops) or 10 metres (high crops such as vines and orchards) for

other products, unless the authorisation for their placing on the market explicitly stipulates a distance to be applied.

The latter two distances may be reduced, to 3 and 5 metres respectively, when using equipment that limits spray drift under the terms of Prefect-approved good practice charters. These safety distances do not apply to the use of biocontrol and low-risk products.



# HIGH SANITARY QUALITY, A MAJOR ADVANTAGE FOR THE GLOBAL MARKET

**2019 was marked by the various episodes of Brexit which had a major impact on the activities of the DGAL and the local directorates (DRAAFs) in the border regions. Successive foreign delegations passed through the DGAL at a fast pace and the discussions led to numerous openings or reopenings of markets. France's non-EU client countries continue to expect impeccable State-guaranteed sanitary quality for agricultural and food products.**

## LIFTING EMBARGOES AND OPENING MARKETS

At international level, committed effort by DGAL and the decentralised departments helped promote the French sanitary system, guaranteeing the conditions for the veterinary and phytosanitary certification of exported products.

The DGAL negotiated sanitary terms to enable more than 40 external markets to be opened (or reopened) to French products, for example the lifting of embargoes on poultry due to avian influenza (Brazil, Taiwan, Indonesia), on live cattle (Morocco, Mongolia, Libya, Jordan, Philippines), on apples

(Philippines) and on vine plants (Uzbekistan).

The DGAL and FranceAgriMer also obtained or maintained export approvals for over 700 French establishments outside the European Union, including around thirty in China for meat products, which had not been achieved for a number of years.

Negotiations were actively pursued, notably with China and Japan, to avoid possible barring of our exports due to the global development of African swine fever. They are continuing in 2020.

In order to contribute to this work, visits by 18 delegations from third countries were welcomed to France in 2019. Prioritisa-



tion of programmes of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) negotiation in the course of 2019 led in 2020 to a tightening of their focus to cover around twenty countries and some hundred country/product combinations, following consultations with individual sectors and interbranch representative bodies.

## ASF ZONING DISCUSSIONS WITH CHINA

China is France's biggest pig-meat export market outside the EU, with growth of over 30% in 2019. Access to that market is simultaneously stimulated and threatened by the global spread of African swine fever (ASF) because if the disease appeared in France exports of pig products from any part of France would be embargoed.

To forestall any such blockage arising, recognition of zoning, which would allow products to be exported from areas free of the disease, has a high priority in discussions with the Chinese authorities. In November 2019, the President of the Republic, Emmanuel Macron, and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed a roadmap for definition of zoning criteria before the end of 2020. France is the only EU Member State to have opened such discussions with China.



### **BREXIT** PREPARING TO IMPLEMENT SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY CHECKS: AN UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGE

**The DGAL (central administration and decentralised departments) has prepared for a no-deal exit by the UK from the EU at the various dates set and then postponed in succession (three times in 2019). In this context, free movement of goods**

**would be replaced by the application of sanitary and phytosanitary checks on goods (animals, plants and their products) imported from the United Kingdom.**

The challenge was all the greater because the number of checks to be performed is almost four times higher than those currently applied on all imports from third (non-EU) countries. And 80% of the flows of British goods into the EU travel via the Dover Strait.

Nearly 200 staff have been recruited and trained to ensure that they will be operational on the day, with all the complexity generated by the successive postponements of the date, up to the vote in the UK Parliament to approve the draft Agreement on 18 October 2019.



This has also required adjustments to infrastructures in conjunction with Customs and port operators: five border inspection posts have been created and three others have had their capacity expanded, some to be manned by teams on site around the clock and seven days a week, which is unprecedented for the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

In support of the above arrangements, a major information campaign has targeted not only national operators but also those of other Member States.

Even if 2020 were to see the finalisation of negotiated terms and conditions for the UK's exit,

these arrangements will be maintained in order to be ready for the possible application of checks on 1 January 2021.

The DGAL is also preparing for certification of goods exports to the United Kingdom.

## **INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATIONS**

### **CODEX ALIMENTARIUS**

#### **Participation in drafting international sanitary standards**

France chairs the Codex alimentarius committee tasked with examining issues related to the functioning of this international body, the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP). Its 31st session in Bordeaux in March 2019, on the theme of new technologies, provided an opportunity for discussion of how to organise its work by virtual means.



The Codex alimentarius, which operates under the aegis of the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) and the World Health Organization (WHO), is an international body with 188 members. It is responsible for drafting and revising international standards on the safety of foodstuffs, aiming to promote healthy, sustainable food and to guarantee honest and fair commercial practices between member countries.

## A VETERINARY G7

### Sharing experience

As part of the French presidency of the G7, on 24 May 2019 the DGAL organised and hosted a meeting of Chief Veterinary Officers (CVO) from the G7 countries (Germany, Canada, United States, France, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom). France's CVO had proposed to his six colleagues that the theme for the proceedings should be the prevention and control of African swine fever (ASF) classical swine fever (CSF) and their consequences for international trade. Also present were the European Commission, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the FAO and the World Bank.

The meeting resulted in a consensual document containing its conclusions, which underscored the importance of adherence to OIE standards, particularly those

relating to the zoning of animal diseases.

The conclusions adopted emphasise the importance of good governance of veterinary services, biosecurity measures, wild fauna surveillance and management programmes, border protection and awareness-raising campaigns, which are essential to the prevention and effective control of these diseases.

Loïc Evain presented these conclusions to the OIE General Session in the following week.



# COMBATING SANITARY CRIME

In addition to issues relating to phytosanitary products, animal identification, trafficking in dogs and veterinary medicines, France's National Unit for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Investigations (BNEVP) was particularly active in 2019, conducting judicial investigations touching on agrifood and involving disease and death.

The unit helps in this way to protect not only the health of farmers and consumers but also whole agricultural sectors.



## IMPORTS

### BONSAIS SEQUESTERED AND THEN DESTROYED

**Illegal importation of bonsais from Japan was detected thanks to a DGAL enquiry. These imported plants were not in compliance with sanitary requirements, potentially endangering the health of entire crop sectors.**

Following a notification from a decentralised agency, the BNEVP conducted an investigation that led to the discovery of plant trafficking involving a number of operators based in south-western France. The importation into France of the plants concerned – bonsais, many highly valuable – was totally prohibited; they had not complied with the required quarantine periods: two years in the country of origin followed by three months in France prior to proposal for sale.



## **FALSIFICATION OF BOVINE SALES DOCUMENTATION**

The BNEVP initiated an investigation that led at the end of 2019 to charges laid by the Guéret (Creuse) prosecutor's office against a number of individuals suspected of organising cattle exports without meeting sanitary obligations.

Those involved are accused of "falsification of documentation, false pretences concerning the nature, quality, origin and quantity of goods, falsification and presentation of falsified affidavits and certificates" as well as "fraudulent use of the title of veterinary surgeon or veterinarian". A range of criminal offences are suspected to have been committed such as fraudulent bluetongue vaccination, provision of false certificates, non-performance of tests on shipped livestock, provision of false vaccination certificates for exported cattle, among others.

The investigations were conducted by the regional office in Limoges with the BNEVP being co-opted as technical expert by the prosecutor's office.

A warrant has been issued and enquiries will continue in 2020.

Nearly four hundred illegally imported plants (with a market value of approximately €400,000) were sequestered by official order in the course of the investigation and subsequently destroyed. Court proceedings were initiated against the two companies involved.

The alleged offences are the marketing of plants prohibited for import, importing plants from a country outside the European Union without a phytosanitary certificate, and from a non-EU country without sanitary checks and lastly falsification of documentation.

Preliminary proceedings were initiated and the associated enquiries will involve the BNEVP.

It should be recalled that non-compliance with sanitary requirements, especially when importing plants, may bring diseases and parasites into France and the European Union.

### **Protecting French and EU crop sectors**

Indeed, illegal imports of bonsais have been responsible in the past for introducing the Asian longhorn beetle, which attacks trees and bushes, in addition to other pests affecting numerous vegetable crops (potatoes, for example).

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food is tasked with seeking to ensure the good health and protection of plants and notably compliance with the requirements applicable to movements of plants imported and put into circulation within the borders of the European Union.

Failure to satisfy those requirements can lead to dramatic situations for French and European crop sectors, in some cases requiring the use of massive quantities of plant protection products and endangering entire sectors of agricultural production.



## **TRADING IN ILLEGAL PESTICIDES: CONVICTION OF A COMPANY**

**A company was severely sanctioned by a court in a ruling in the first instance in May 2019 for illegal sales of pesticides in France following an investigation by the BNEVP.**

In 2015, the BNEVP carried out various checks on farm operators procuring plant protection products from a foreign distributor very active on the French market. The investigation was conducted in six different regions and set out to prove and to seek penalties for the delivery, purchase and use of Spani-

sh pesticides not authorised for sale in France.

Following these enquiries, numerous products banned in France and associated with sanitary and/or environmental impacts were officially sequestered and subsequently destroyed. A number of judicial proceedings were initiated with the relevant prosecutors' offices. Some were transferred to the Public Health Unit in Marseille and preliminary proceedings were instituted against the Spanish operator.

The case was heard by a court in Marseille in February 2019. The company and its head were convicted and received severe penalties (respectively, a fine of €100,000; a prison term of six months, suspended, and a fine

of €30,000). The market operator concerned has decided to appeal against the ruling.

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## **BANNED AND/ OR COUNTERFEIT VETERINARY MEDICINES: INTERNATIONAL ACTION**

A working group composed of representatives of various countries was set up in 2007 to verify the proper application of regulatory controls on veterinary medicines. The BNEVP is a member of this working group, which met in Tel Aviv in June 2019 and in Helsinki in November 2019.

The international integration of markets is conducive to trafficking, in veterinary medicines for example. In order to combat such networks and limit the introduction into France of medicines that are unauthorised and/or counterfeit, it is important to structure and coordinate the effort at supranational level.

## **COMBATING FOOD FRAUD: “OPERATION OPSON”**

**A new operation to combat fraud and counterfeit foodstuffs codenamed “OPSON VIII” was conducted from December 2018 to April 2019. Five months of operations, 16 EU Member States ... The target? Food fraud connected with organic farming.**

France took part in this “hard-hitting” operation through its inspection staff specialising in combating organised crime in the area of food fraud, including the DGAL for the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

Checks targeted for example food and feed products intended for human or animal consumption and certified as coming from organic farming. They were coordinated by Interpol and Europol (international and European bodies combating major international organised crime and terrorism). No non-compliance was detected in the batches checked.

Alongside this, the certified organic rabbit-farming sector was investigated by the DGAL's investigation unit, the BNEVP, in connection with the possible use of veterinary medicines. Once again, none of the inspected breeders, livestock farmers or cooperatives specialising in the marketing of rabbit meat were

charged in the administrative or criminal courts.

## **WHAT IS THE BNEVP?**

France's National Unit for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Investigations (Brigade nationale d'enquêtes vétérinaires et phytosanitaires – BNEVP) is staffed by around twenty officers within the General Directorate for Food (DGAL) and it can conduct enquiries on the ground anywhere in France. It is tasked with combating organised crime in the areas of animal and plant health and protection, in addition to food safety. Its investigators are requisitioned by the courts in connection with investigations.

# MODERNISATION AND RESOURCES

Anticipation, surveillance, organisation, resource deployment and experts are all essential to preventing crises and guaranteeing sanitary safety at all points in the food chain.

## EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE PLATFORMS: HELPING PREVENT SANITARY HAZARDS

**he purpose of setting up epidemiological surveillance platforms is to improve sanitary and biological surveillance across the country. This can enhance the effectiveness of prevention of sanitary hazards that can affect plants, animals and the food chain.**

The use of systems for the rapid detection of pathogenic organisms (which cause disease) must be harmonised and coordinated across the three key domains: animal health, plant health and food, adopting a “One Health” approach. An integrated approach to surveillance in these three

domains was therefore implemented in 2019.

Three platforms were set up, as long ago as 2011 in the case of animal health, and in 2018 for the remaining two. These bring together the relevant sanitary authorities, health agencies and research bodies, technical institutes, laboratories and professionals in animal and crop production, processing, distribution and catering.

The role of these platforms is to identify sanitary issues requiring the deployment of integrated surveillance systems across the various domains (salmonella surveillance, for example), the establishment of necessary collaborative actions and the pooling of



technological developments and expertise (e.g. surveillance and data quality engineering, international sanitary watch, evaluation of surveillance systems, communication, and so on).

## EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE ENABLES:

- **detection** of the appearance of an emerging disease or a sanitary hazard,
- **evaluation** of the sanitary impact and economic consequences of a disease,
- **prioritisation** of the various control measures

## EMERGENCY PLANS: PREPARING FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT

The DGAL is continuing its overhaul of its emergency plans in the areas of plant health and animal health. The National Emergency Sanitary Intervention Plan (PNISU) system stems from consideration of this area, allowing the DGAL to prepare itself for all and any sanitary crises in the animal, plant or food domains. (cf. page 25).

The DGAL's Sanitary Emergency Unit (MUS) is responsible, in addition to managing sanitary emergencies and crises, for coordinating the deployment of these systems (preparation, monitoring of procedures, network leadership, and so on).

What is needed is to put in place methods for the organisation and deployment of services and to roll out a body of documentation and resources to help staff and partners be operationally effective in times of crisis.

On animal health, 2019 saw the publication of technical guides added to the document pool, notably in connection with preparations for depopulation operations (production of datasheets, tools and training, etc.).



To find out more :

- <http://intranet.national.agri/Chantier-de-depeuplement>  
<http://intranet.national.agri/Formations,6386>



## RESYTAL: A NEW DIRECTION, MORE EFFECTIVE TOOLS

**RESYTAL, the food information system, passed a milestone in 2019 with the finalisation of the developments for the management, approval and inspection of establishments, plus the launch of the second modernisation cycle.**

This new stage focuses on an overhaul of the management of surveillance, sampling and testing, as well as the implementation of cartographic resources to facilitate the handling of sanitary crises in the country. The digital transition began at the end of 2019 with the roll out of the DGAL's first online procedure en-

abling those in industry to apply for entry in the phytosanitary register under the new regulation on plant health in force since 14 December 2019.

This is an effective online procedure connected to the Resytal information system, allowing the data to be handled directly by the industry professionals, who then automatically obtain an INUPP identifier (for "unique identifier in the national professional phytosanitary operator register"). Prior to being authorised to issue phytosanitary passports, attribute NIMP15 standard labelling or request issuance of export certificates.



## BUDGET AND STAFF

The budget of the General Directorate for Food (DGAL) and the decentralised departments (programme 206 “Food Sanitary Safety and Quality”) tasked with implementing public policy on the health and protection of plants, livestock and food safety, in addition to food policy, totalled €535m for 2019.

The cap on jobs in programme 206 stood at 4,695 “full time equivalents” (FTE). Programme 206 benefited in 2019 from the creation of a number of posts in order to cope with the additional deployment of sanitary and phytosanitary border checks due to Brexit.



## INTERNAL AUDITS

Almost 150 internal audits were carried out in 2019, including 60 audits of veterinary services in abattoirs. Such audits enable the DGAL to ensure adherence to regulations and to encourage continuous improvement in the functioning of its departments.

## VALUABLE SUPPORT: EXPERTS IN ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

The DGAL has available to it a newly overhauled network of experts comprising 46 national referent experts (100% of their working time is devoted to national duties) and 107 resource individuals (dedicating 20-30% of their time to national duties) located nationwide. These officers perform diverse tasks related to animal and plant health, animal protection and food safety. They are a source of technical support for the central administration when implementing public policy. As an example, in the area of plant health and protection, given their knowledge of crop sectors and familiarity with the reality on the ground, the experts in this network provide their technical and scientific input to assist inspections and the draf-

ting of regulations, the design of surveillance plans, the production of phytosanitary overview reports and analysis of practices.

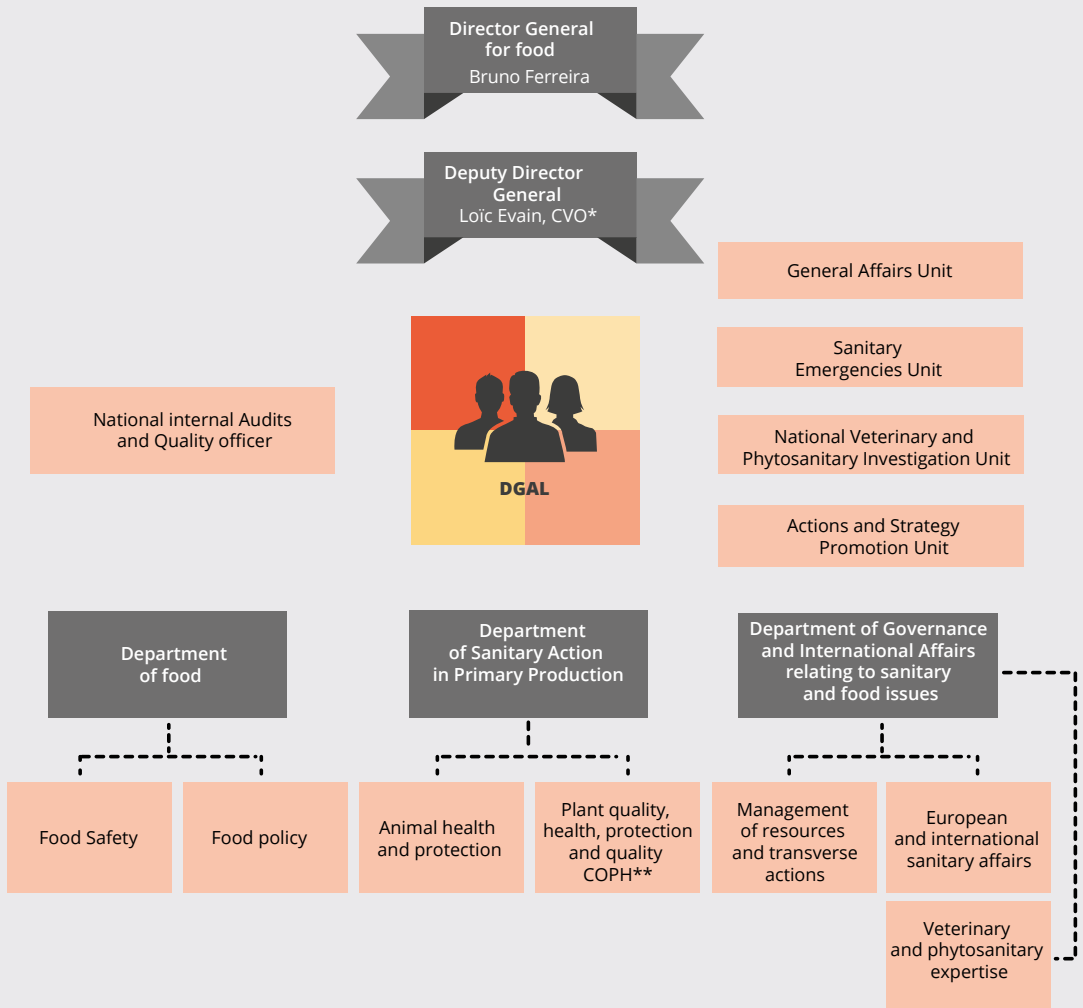
In 2019, the following can be cited as important work areas for the “plant” network:

- revision of the surveillance plans for quarantine organisms under the new EU regulation. This came into force on 14 December 2019 and stipulates that every Member State should organise the surveillance of over 200 harmful organisms in order to characterise their sanitary status. The expert network has been asked to carry out an overhaul of official surveillance of regu-

lated organisms to adopt a totally new approach,

- support for the DGAL for impact analyses of changes in regulations on plant protection products: constraints on application near residential areas, performance qualifications for spraying equipment and the impacts of a broadening of regulatory measures for the protection of pollinators.

# DGAL ORGANISATION CHART



\* Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO)

\*\* Chief Officer for Plant Health (COPH)

## THE DGAL IN FIGURES: INSPECTIONS AND CONTROLS IN 2019

The DGAL has a workforce of just under 4,800 full time equivalents (FTEs), plus 14,000 government-approved sanitary veterinarians, 30 national reference laboratories and around 150 specialist test laboratories, the majority attached to France's territorial *départements*.

### Checks on imports from third countries

Imported goods	Number of batches checked	of which, number rejected
Animals and animal products	42,400	403
Plants and plant products	66,350	834
Animal feed not of animal origin	2,850	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>111,600</b>	<b>1,246</b>

### Certification of intra-EU trade

		Number of checks
Live animals	Certification inspections (outgoing from territory)	95,800
	Inspections for verification of compliance of incoming batches	290

### Annual surveillance programme for contamination in primary production, food and feed

The results for the 2019 campaign will be available in the PSPC overview report for 2019 to be published in September 2020.

	Samples taken in 2018	of which, samples found non-compliant	Sampling scheduled in 2019
<b>TOTAL comprising :</b>	<b>60,661</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>68,000</b>
Physico-chemical contaminants* in animal products	51,553	569	50,000
Biological contaminants** and toxins in animal products	2,543	57	2,800
Residues of plant protection products in primary plant production	1,631	65	1,500
Contaminants in products imported from third countries	1,058	7	3 % of imported batches
Antimicrobial resistance in commensal and zoonotic bacteria	3,876	-	12,500

\* Comprising veterinary medicines, banned substances, growth promoters, pesticides, antiparasitics and trace metals.

\*\* Comprising bacteria, organic pollutants (other than pesticides), mycotoxins and phycotoxins.

## Animal health and protection inspections

Animal protection	Number of inspections	Follow-up procedures	Comprising				
			Official warnings	Official notices to remedy	Penalty notices	Permit withdrawal or suspension	Total or partial closure
<b>TOTAL comprising :</b>	<b>13,700</b>	4,050	2,242	1,500	290	6	12
Farm livestock	4,970						
Animal transportation	4,400						
Pets	1,740						
Equine livestock	1,010						
Animal laboratory trials	260						
Abattoirs	1,320						

## Public health on livestock farms

Public health on livestock farms	Number of inspections	Follow-up procedures	comprising				
			Official warnings	Official notices to remedy	Penalty notices	Permit withdrawal or suspension	Total or partial closure
<b>TOTAL comprising :</b>	<b>17,700</b>	1,950	1,350	560	20	14	6
Sanitary inspections on livestock farms	2,330						
Biosecurity	1,520						
Salmonella	8,400						
Identification	2,520						
Veterinary pharmacy	1,470						
Animal by-products	520						
Animal feed	220						
Reproduction	250						
Trade in live animals	470						

## Plant quality, health and protection inspections

	Number of inspections	Follow-up procedures	comprising				
			Official warnings	Official notices to remedy	Penalty notices	Permit withdrawal or suspension	Total or partial closure
<b>TOTAL comprising:</b>	<b>13,960</b>	<b>4,830</b>	3,110	0	200	30	0
Inspections of users of plant protection products	7,160						
Inspections at the point of distribution of plant protection products	740						
Verifications of observance of hygiene rules	1,630						
Checks for issuance of European phytosanitary passports	4,430						

## Food safety inspections

	Number of inspections	Follow-up procedures	comprising					Other measures**
			Official warnings	Official notices to remedy	Penalty notices	Permit withdrawal or suspension	Total or partial closure	
<b>TOTAL comprising:</b>	<b>58,200</b>	<b>31,660</b>	23,230	6,660	780	50	785	155
Facilities for slaughter*, processing and warehousing	17,000	6,630						
Institutional catering	10,000	5,420						
Commercial food outlets	20,000	13,350						
Shops	11,200	6,260						

\* This figure includes only annual inspections of slaughter facilities where the veterinary services also provide permanent inspection. \*\* Obligation to provide training, goods sequestration or destruction, cleaning, product recall, alterations of premises, etc.

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