



MINISTÈRE  
DE L'AGRICULTURE  
ET DE L'ALIMENTATION

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**The French General  
Directorate for Food (DGAL)  
IN ACTION**



# EDITORIAL

2021 was a year of far-reaching change for France's General Directorate for Food (DGAL). Reorganising its operations around the "One Health" approach, the DGAL placed transversality across all departments and a holistic approach to the issues at the very centre of its activity. This transformation enabled it to propose a new way of working together both in its Paris teams and with the decentralised departments, for the benefit of all concerned.

Regarding its operations, the year featured a number of major events. I would point to the following, without being exhaustive: Brexit and the application of sanitary controls with the United Kingdom, the signing of the "African Swine Fever" zoning agreement with China following four years of negotiations, preparation of France's presidency of the Council of the European Union, the entry into force of the Animal Health law and the separation of sales from advisory services with regard to plant protection products, the launch of the chlordecone 4 plan, the plan for enhancing the attractiveness of jobs in abattoir inspection, the ramping up of epidemiological surveillance platforms, and of course several health-related crises of importance, avian influenza being an example.

The government's Economic Recovery Plan naturally demanded major efforts from our teams, but it has also been a great lever for action, most notably in the areas of animal protection and food policy, and I salute the success achieved by the measures implemented or initiated by the DGAL.

Once again, the DGAL was able collectively in 2021 to step up to the mark, promoting the sanitary safety of us all, sustainable food of high quality and an agroecological transition in our agriculture.

I leave you to read the pages that follow and learn about the latest developments for us, as well as some of the reasons for the pride we feel.

Happy reading!

**Bruno Ferreira**

HEAD OF THE GENERAL DIRECTORATE FOR FOOD



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# THE DGAL: DEEPLY ROOTED IN FRENCH SOCIETY

The DGAL keeps a watch over the safety and the quality of food at every level in the food chain, as well as the health and protection of animals and plants, working in conjunction with all stakeholders: risk assessment agencies, farming and agrifood professionals, consumers, veterinarians, non-profit associations, and others. It acts by designing the regulations linked to its assigned tasks and its services in the French territorial départements and regions and verifies compliance. It also applies incentive measures by driving and guiding a range of public policies implemented across its network.

At the EU and international levels, it promotes France's food, sanitary and phytosanitary models.







## RISK MANAGEMENT TASKS RELATING TO FOOD AND PUBLIC HEALTH

The DGAL is tasked with the protection of the health of consumers, animals, plants and the environment by laying down and verifying the sanitary conditions in which animal and plant products are made and marketed or brought into the country. To do this, it needs to anticipate the risks, evaluate them and define appropriate preventive measures or regulations.

The complexity of the issues involved requires integrated, transverse risk management that calls upon a range of technical, scientific and organisational skills, plus the adoption of a more international overview of the risks.

## BUDGET AND HUMAN RESOURCES

The budget of the General Directorate for Food (DGAL) and its decentralised departments (budget programme 206 “Food sanitary safety and quality”) responsible for implementing public policies on the health and protection of plants, animals, food safety and national food policy stood at **€599m** in 2021.

The cap placed on headcount by programme 206 was set at **4,806 full time equivalent worked hours (FTE)** for 2021. Programme 206 benefited in 2021 from the creation of a number of posts to cope with the deployment of sanitary and phytosanitary border checks in the wake of Brexit.

The DGAL uses a newly overhauled network of 48 experts of reference (100% of whose time is devoted to national-level tasks) and 126 resource persons (20-30% of their time devoted to national-level tasks) based across the whole of France.

These staff members carry out a variety of tasks in the areas of food, animal and plant health and provide technical support for the central administration in implementing public policies.

# STRATEGIC PLANNING: LOOKING FORWARD TO TOMORROW AND AN ADMINISTRATION AT THE SERVICE OF ALL

2021 was the first year of operational implementation of the DGAL's strategic plan for 2021-2023.

This strategic plan involved the setting up of a new organisational structure to enable a more transverse, integrated approach to public policies fully aligned with the "One Health" strategy the DGAL has set out to make central to its activity. It embodies a vision and a determination to reposition the DGAL in terms of its relationship with its partners and its decentralised departments as well as, more generally, with civil society. The purpose of this more broadly-based, more consultative approach to health-related issues is to encourage more appropriate responses to the need for healthier, more sustainable food.







## A CLARIFICATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP WITH ITS DECENTRALISED DEPARTMENTS AND ITS PARTNERS

An ambitious effort has begun to foster the emergence of a truly effective system of sanitary governance in the regions. This is also directed at a new clarification of the roles assigned to the various levels of administration and the institutional and sectoral partners operating within the DGAL's remit.

## A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH SOCIETY

Concerned as it is to be a government department connected to realities, the DGAL wishes to listen more closely to its partners. Work has begun for this, and much remains to be done. DGAL wished to propose a different mode of interaction to its partners without delay.

This has meant that some of its work groups (those that bring together institutional, sectoral and non-profit partners) dealing with the preparation of a new animal welfare strategy have been working in "collective intelligence" mode. The aim of this method is to facilitate discussion and the emergence of ideas, to make good use of collective resources and to enhance effectiveness.

## A PHILOSOPHY FOR A REPOSITIONING VIS-À-VIS CIVIL SOCIETY

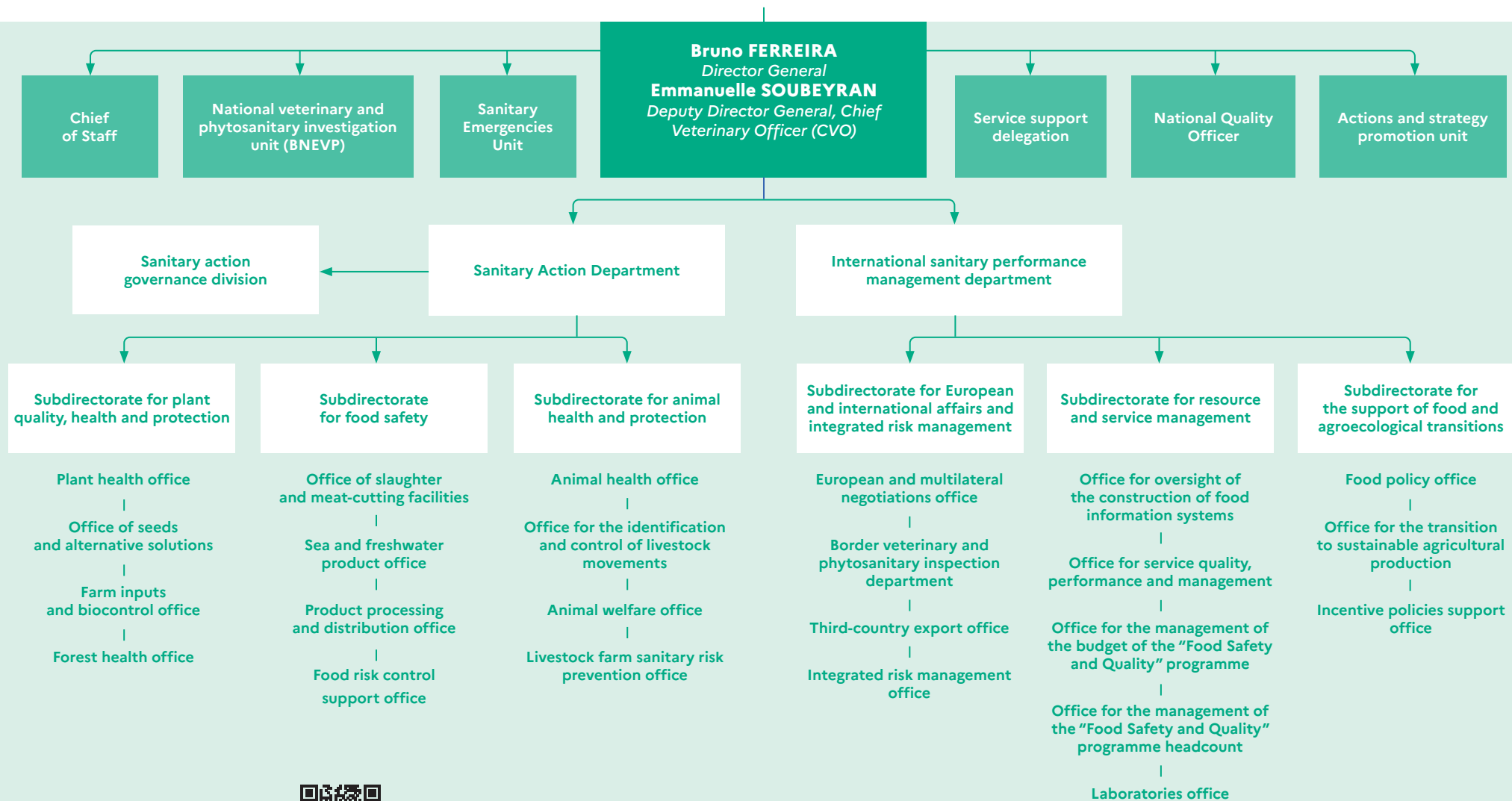
In order to conduct consistent, coordinated actions that serve the public, the DGAL has set out to provide itself with a philosophy that defines its commitment to serving the nation's citizens.

**Our commitment is to meet what society expects of us by ensuring that our administration listens, acts effectively and is responsive, with the following objectives:**

- To create the right conditions for, and to ensure a high level of sanitary safety for the benefit of the public and the economic performance of industry sectors,
- To ensure that food is safe, healthy, sustainable and available to all by overseeing and verifying the health of plants and animals, as well as the safety for health of foodstuffs, adopting a "One Health" approach",
- To create the right conditions for, and to ensure a high level of animal welfare,
- To foster the agroecological transition and the sustainability of the systems of production by regulatory means and the implementation of incentivising policies.



## ORGANIGRAMME DE LA DGAL







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## “One Health”: one health in practice

The “One Health” concept covers certain practical realities set against the general backdrop of the interdependence of human, animal and plant health and environmental protection. That interdependence is not a new phenomenon. Major historical zoonoses such as brucellosis, tuberculosis or even rabies have contributed to the implementation of the core policies of human and veterinary public health. We can of course also refer here to BSE (“mad cow” disease) or Covid-19.

Sixty percent of known infectious human diseases are of animal origin. Emerging diseases often involve wild fauna. Antimicrobial resistance, whose origin can be human, animal or even environmental, is now a major global public health issue. Plant health is increasingly threatened by damage to biodiversity and by global warming. And it also has knock-on effects, on the health of ecosystems, human beings and animals, for example.



## THE CHLORDECONE PLAN (2021-2027): TOWARDS ZERO CHLORDECONE IN FOOD

Chlordecone-based products were used in the French West Indies from 1972 to 1993 for the control of banana beetle. Although it has been banned for nearly 30 years, chlordecone is still found in soil and water due to its great stability. A fourth chlordecone plan has now followed three consecutive government plans conducted since 2008 for the protection of the local population.

Due to their scale and persistence over time, the effects of chlordecone pollution represent a major issue for public health, the environment, agriculture, economics and society in the West Indies. Responding to the high level of concern they arouse, France's government has implemented three consecutive action plans over the period 2008-2020. The fourth chlordecone plan took over from these in 2021. Covering a period of six years, this inter-ministerial plan involves an amplification of the measures to protect the health of the West Indies population already developed under the earlier schemes.

In this context, the DGAL leads the implementation of measures underpinned by the objective of progress towards "zero chlordecone" in food. Pursuit of that objective will notably involve the following:

- Development and provision of soil, water and fodder testing free of charge given that production is possible in areas contaminated by chlordecone. Such testing,



as provided by the local food, agriculture and forestry directorates (DAAF) in Martinique and Guadeloupe, will then allow the risk associated with the presence of chlordecone in the environment to be controlled.

- Development of a model for the prediction of chlordecone concentrations in animal tissues, in addition to solutions for the decontamination of livestock raised in chlordecone-contaminated areas.
- Maintenance of high levels of inspection pressure on foodstuffs in order to verify the compliance with the maximum residue levels set for chlordecone of animal food products from livestock farming and fisheries, as well as primary crop production. These checks

are carried out by the two DAAFs, with over 4,300 scheduled in 2021.

- Execution of checks at interdepartmental level in central government, with the priority being given to commercial activities not declared to the authorities, i.e. in the so-called "informal" sector.
- Highlighting the quality and origin of products placed on the consumer market with respect to the chlordecone risk. Local initiatives are currently being developed in Martinique and Guadeloupe.

## BRUCELLOSIS ON A LIVESTOCK FARM: A ZONOSIS UNDER SURVEILLANCE

During routine sanitary surveillance for brucellosis on livestock farms, an outbreak of bovine brucellosis was confirmed on 10 November 2021 on an Upper Savoy dairy farm. Bovine brucellosis is a disease in animals that is difficult to diagnose and transmissible to humans. Due to its high contagiousness and the zoonotic risk, its eradication is mandatory. The livestock on the contaminated farm had therefore to be culled in its entirety.

Beginning in the second half of the twentieth century in France, bovine brucellosis was the focus of a programme of eradication. As a result, France has enjoyed bovine brucellosis-free status since 2005.

Bovine brucellosis can manifest in abortion, reduced fertility, declining milk yields and incapacitating joint lesions. Some infected animals may fail to show clinical signs and **diagnosis of the disease continues to be problematic.**

Available tests cannot distinguish effectively between healthy and sick livestock in an infected herd, and **only a complete cull of the herd can guarantee control of the outbreak.** The French government provides compensation for livestock culls, production losses, cleaning and disinfection of premises, as well as the cost of herd replacement.

The most recent outbreak of bovine brucellosis detected in France dates back to 2012, with links to the outbreak of infections in Alpine Ibex populations in the Bargy mountain range in Upper Savoy. Surveillance of bovine brucellosis has been greatly intensified in herds on summer pastures in the Bargy area, since this contributed to the new outbreak in 2021.

Epidemiological investigations conducted by the veterinary services, ANSES and the French Office for Biodiversity (OFB) are currently in progress with the aim of understanding the the origin of the contamination

and the potential involvement of wild fauna in the new outbreak. Action will be taken in the very short term to reinforce the surveillance and control strategy in place since 2012 with a view to an effort to eradicate the disease in the wild fauna for the protection of human and animal health.



**Bovine brucellosis is transmissible to humans through consumption of fresh dairy products made with raw milk** from livestock infected by the bacteria or following direct contact with animals suffering from brucellosis. Cheeses matured for more than 60 days or eaten after cooking present no risk to consumers. All dairy products that may potentially be contaminated or act as sources of contamination placed on the market prior to the suspected outbreak have been withdrawn from sale or recalled.

In addition, for preventive reasons, a specific monitoring protocol that includes monthly checks on milk and serological testing of livestock has been implemented for dairy herds on summer pastures in the Bargy mountain area in order to guarantee that the milk produced is free of contamination.

→ **PRODUCT RECALLS ARE PUBLISHED ON RAPPELCONSO**



## THE NATIONAL HEALTH/ ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (PNSE 4): LAUNCH OF THE “ONE HEALTH” MONITORING GROUP

**Meeting on 28 September and 7 December 2021 with member of parliament Sandrine Le Feur and Jean-Luc Angot (CGAAER) in the chair, this group has been assigned two main tasks: monitoring four flagship actions in PNSE 4, as published in May 2021, and acting as a forum for discussion. This is at present the only group to be advocating and communicating on the “One Health” approach at the interministerial and national levels. The DGAL provides the group’s secretarial resources.**

The links between public health, animal health, plant health and the preservation of ecosystems (environment plus biodiversity) have been the subject of discussion for many years. The current pandemic has returned the “One Health” approach to a central position in worldwide debate and concern, leading to numerous initiatives most notably relating to the link between zoonoses (i.e. diseases transmitted by animals to humans either directly or via food) and global biodiversity loss. This concept is directed at the promotion of a multidisciplinary, holistic approach to public health issues. On 1 December 2021 it was given an official operational definition by the One Health High-Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP), with WHO ratification.

The PNSE 4 One Health monitoring group has a membership of almost 80 (representatives from local government, research and expert bodies, organisations active in biodiversity preservation and public health risk management, environmental defence non-profits, sectoral bodies and official departments and agencies (health, environment, agriculture, research). All come from entities active on one of the three health-related dimensions: human, animal or ecosystemic.

**Together, the four programmes monitored by the group illustrate the “One Health” concept:**

- Informing the owners of animals on the use of biocidal products.
- Expanding knowledge among sector professionals of the links between environment and health; development and improvement of information on the supply of “One Health” training.
- Prevention of the sanitary impacts of pests using methods compatible with protection of the environment.
- Surveillance of the health of the wild terrestrial fauna and prevention of zoonoses.

The work of the group will continue in 2022 in support of the implementation of PNSE 4 over the period 2021-2024 with a view to completion of its assigned task of addressing environmental and health issues by means of an integrated “One Health” approach.



## PRESERVING BIODIVERSITY: A QUESTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE

The DGAL's involvement in defining the new National Biodiversity Strategy (SNB3) marked the close of 2021. Adopting a "One Health" approach on environmental and biodiversity issues, the DGAL promoted a varied range of topics linked to its different areas of responsibility, most notably the surveillance of pollinators and the health of wild fauna. Publication of the strategy is expected during the first quarter of 2022.

SNB3 is part of a series of international commitments given by France and represents an international obligation under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The negotiations surrounding the Convention provide for the adoption in 2022 of a global framework binding on the United Nations and its members. SNB3 is also consistent with the commitments given by the EU in the European Biodiversity Strategy and the "Farm to Fork" strategy.

Launched in January 2021 by the Minister for the Ecological Transition, the new SNB3 strategy will set targets in favour of the preservation of ecosystems and species, our health and our quality of life for the next ten years. In parallel with the consultation phase (involving local regional stakeholders, the general public, experts, consultative bodies), the DGAL took part in defining the method for building the strategy, building on



contributions from the consultation processes, technical working groups and ministerial proposals.

The DGAL's input notably related to topics linked to the surveillance of exposure of wild pollinators to plant protection products and the surveillance of the health of wild fauna, adopting a "One Health" approach. Preservation of pollinating insects, both wild and domesticated, represents a major issue if food production capacity is to be assured for many crops, as well as for protection of the diversity of animal and plant species essential to the proper balance of ecosystems.

It also encouraged the adoption of the targets set out in France's "EGAlim" law in the area of institutional catering (50% sustainable, high-quality products, including 20% products from organic farming, as of 1 January 2022).

The DGAL will be involved in implementing the strategy given the role of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food as co-leader in many programmes.

## A NEW EUROPEAN REGULATION ON VETERINARY MEDICINES

The new EU regulation on veterinary medicines came into force at the end of January 2022: it advocates the “One Health” approach, notably setting out to improve the availability of veterinary medicines and to combat the antimicrobial resistance responsible for several thousands of deaths in France every year.

The DGAL took part in the discussions that led to its adoption after many years of work initiated by France. It helps ensure a better response to European strategies for prevention and protection of veterinary public health due to the opportunities veterinary medicines offer in authorising medicines for innovative therapies.

Such medicines can contribute to the effort to control certain epidemics and new emerging diseases. The development and authorisation of new vaccines to control avian influenza or African Swine Fever are indeed increasingly essential for reasons relating to animal health, human health and economics.

Lastly, this regulation reinforces and harmonises the antimicrobial resistance control measures. It allows

prudent, rational use of antimicrobials to be encouraged, reserving some of them for human medicine while continuing to allow their use in animal health, which is essential.

## ECOANTIBIO: CONSOLIDATING PROGRESS

Combating antimicrobial resistance requires a comprehensive “One Health” approach: the preventive measures applied in human health must not be dissociated from those used in animal health nor from the steps taken to maintain ecosystems in good condition.

The communication campaign for the Ecoantibio 2 plan (2017-2022), on the theme “Antibiotics – the right way at the right time”, which was repeated in November 2021, targets livestock farmers in the various sectors of animal production, as well as veterinarians and pet owners. It continues to call on all concerned to use veterinary antibiotics correctly, highlighting biosecurity, vaccination and animal welfare in order to prevent disease and optimise antibiotic use.

In the space of nine years Ecoantibio has led to a reduction of 53.3% in the sales volume of veterinary antibiotics and **45.3% in the exposure of animals to antimicrobials**, across all livestock sectors. Additionally, over 200 research projects have been funded (development of tools for sector professionals, applied research, training courses, etc.). A third version of the plan is currently being drafted.







## EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE PLATFORMS: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO SANITARY SURVEILLANCE



The three epidemiological surveillance platforms overseen by the DGAL are multidisciplinary, collaborative spaces with multiple partners dedicated, respectively, to epidemiological surveillance in animal health (the ESA platform), epidemiological surveillance in plant health (the ESV platform) and food chain surveillance (the SCA platform). Their goal is enhanced effectiveness for surveillance in these three areas and better prevention of sanitary risks, ranging from primary production to the consumer.

**Internationally**, the Codex Alimentarius antimicrobial resistance task force has completed its work. Since the beginning of these efforts nearly ten years ago, the DGAL has been closely involved in defining and advocating French and European positions; this has notably led to progress internationally in the context of the revision of the Code of Practice and applied Directives on the surveillance of antimicrobial resistance, particularly with regard to avoidance of use of antimicrobials as growth promoters.

Thanks to shared governance and structured coordination, both within each platform and between all three, they are able to decompartmentalise domains and disciplines for a “One Health” approach to surveillance. The introduction of Public Health France (SpF), the national public health surveillance agency that is already a partner of the SCA platform, into the ESA platform in 2021 strengthens the integrated approach to the surveillance of zoonoses, diseases common to both humans and animals.

The three platforms co-produce methodological tools to improve sanitary surveillance; a methodological guide to the quality of surveillance data published in 2021 is available online on the platforms’ website.

Another example of collaborative work is the SCA platform, which produced in 2021 a methodological assistance document for the surveillance of *Escherichia coli* “STEC” bacteria in raw milk cheeses.

Shigatoxigenic *Escherichia coli* (STEC) bacteria are naturally present in the intestines of certain ruminants in the absence of disease symptoms. When milk contaminated

by certain STECs is used to produce cheese from raw milk, the bacteria can cause severe medical conditions in consumers such as Haemolytic-Uraemic Syndrome (HUS), which is particularly serious in young children. The working group, comprising public- and private-sector partners (from industry and technical bodies), has formulated recommendations to improve surveillance of this sanitary hazard throughout the food chain.



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# 2



## Food and food safety

Inspections, checks and combating fraud all help to guarantee sanitary safety in food, protecting the health of consumers. Added to this DGAL core task is the management of public food policy.

## FRANCE'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN: SUPPORT FOR HEALTHY, LOCAL FOOD AVAILABLE TO ALL



The government's Economic Recovery Plan has funded four food-related measures involving the DGAL in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. In total, this amounts to €140m in favour of initiatives that foster the supply of local, sustainable food available to all. The DGAL has led the implementation of these measures.

- The "local, inclusive food" measure in the Economic Recovery Plan (€30m) supports actors (purchasing groups and consumer cooperatives, farmers' markets, non-profits, etc.) working to develop access to local products for the lowest-income and marginalised population groups.
- €24m is earmarked for local initiatives directed at increasing access to healthy, safe, sustainable, high-quality and local food for citizens isolated from such supplies.
- €4.12m supports systemic, innovative projects by national agricultural and rural bodies (ONVARs), Chambers of Agriculture and chains of social, inclusive grocery stores.
- **Significantly greater numbers of shared kitchen gardens and the development of urban agriculture (€17m):** The purpose of this measure is to bring about



a fivefold increase in the number of such gardens across France, especially in urban and suburban areas, subsidising investments to expand this type of land use and improve existing facilities by putting new resources (tools, development programmes, etc.) in place.

This support can be accessed by responding to calls for project proposals in France's territorial départements; they apply across the whole of Metropolitan France and its overseas territories. As of the close of 2021, more than 1,120 projects had been accepted, including nearly 15% in "priority urban districts" (QPVs).

- **Support for small school canteens** in achieving the targets in the "EGAlim" law (€43.5m).

By the end of 2021, this measure had helped **1,500 small municipalities implement projects** to assist small school canteens in obtaining supply of fresh produce, reducing waste or eliminating plastic packaging, as well as to achieve the targets laid down in the "EGAlim" law, **which benefited over 520,000 schoolchildren.**

- Central/local government partnerships for the promotion of **local regional food projects (€80m).**

Local regional food projects (PATs), created in 2015, encourage the relocation of agriculture and food to local regions, notably by supporting the entry of new farmers into the industry, short distribution channels and local produce in canteens. PATs play a key role in speeding up the agricultural and food transition by bringing producers, processors, distributors, local government and consumers closer together.

## THE NATIONAL FOOD PROGRAMME: STILL JUST AS ACTIVE

- The 2020-2021 edition of the call for projects under the National Food Programme (PNA) has led to the provision of support to 172 collaborative projects: 151 emerging PAT projects and 21 innovative projects with national or regional scope. The initial budget, increased sevenfold to €14m thanks to support from France's Economic Recovery Plan, has made this satisfactory result possible.

In addition to PATs, the funds allocated by this call for projects have aided various initiatives **against food waste**, another core PNA priority. 2022 will also be the year for the launch of the 3rd National Pact Against Food Waste.

- The “Food Education” component of the PNA has been expanded by adapting existing teaching programmes (e.g. the “Taste Classes” scheme) to the Covid-19 situation in schools, these being made available to teachers and pupils on the Ministry website. Resources have also been deployed in France's regions to extend this scheme.
- Where the “social justice” aspect of the PNA is concerned, major demands have been made on the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry for Solidarity and Health. This is because the **Covid-19 pandemic** has increased the need for closer relations between all food chain stakeholders and non-profit associations. In addition to destabilisation of the food chain, the population suffering from food insecurity has expanded due to the crisis.

To support them, instructions have been circulated on the right conditions for deep-freezing foodstuffs in ins-



## The EU school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme: educational videos for schoolchildren

**Working with the General Directorate for the Economic Performance of Enterprises (DGPE) and the Ministries of Education and of Health, the DGAL has produced new educational tools targeting different age ranges in order to familiarise schoolchildren with the nutritional characteristics of fruit, vegetables, milk and dairy products.**

The EU programme for the distribution of fruit, vegetables, milk and dairy products in schools does in fact provide for the implementation of mandatory educational activities for schoolchildren from nursery school to high school in Metropolitan France and its overseas territories.

The aim is to stimulate the curiosity of children by encouraging them to learn about the origins of foodstuffs and their nutritional benefits in order to familiarise them with those they are not in the habit of consuming. The teaching tools produced are intended to promote more regular consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables

and consumption of fruit, vegetables, milk and dairy products of good quality.

There is an obligation to implement at least one educational measure in each school year to be eligible for EU product distribution funding.

The purpose of this measure to lead schoolchildren to adopt dietary habits that are healthier and in line with public health recommendations (cf. the National Health and Nutrition Programme – PNNS, and the National Food and Nutrition Programme – PNAN). It also promotes the distribution of fresh fruit and vegetables and/or milk and dairy products that have been awarded official quality labels

→ WATCH THE VIDEOS





titutional catering, along with a guide to donations, recalling the regulatory and sanitary context for food donations and encouraging contacts between the different stakeholders.

**An action plan for radical changes in food aid** and combating food insecurity was launched in September 2021, extending to the end of 2022: its objectives are to ensure short-term responses to emergencies.

## REGIONAL FOOD PROJECTS: UNITING LOCAL STRENGTHS FOR BETTER FOOD

Regional food projects (PATs) start out from a shared diagnosis of local agricultural and food production, the food requirements of the local population and the region's social, economic and environmental advantages and constraints. They contribute to the roll-out of national food policy objectives in such regions and their reconciliation with local issues.

PATs are generally initiated with local government as the driving force, focusing on a key topic that represents a particular need in the local area. The DGAL makes use of a national system to lead and support project promoters.

By the end of 2021, more than 330 PATs had been granted recognition by the Ministry.

In the second half of 2021, consideration began to be given to implementing national-level governance for PATs, prioritising the setting up of a shared monitoring unit and an evaluation of the scheme.



## A NOVEL PLATFORM FOR ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE "EGALIM" LAW

The DGAL partnered with the Interministerial Digital Directorate (DINUM) to set up the "Ma Cantine" (My Canteen) platform in February 2021. The goal of the partnership: to use the beta. gouv.fr incubator and the state start-up model to innovate in the direction of a food transition in institutional catering in support of users (managers, canteen customers, elected representatives, and so on)..

The task is to help institutional catering professionals achieve the ambitious goals of the "EGALim" law, goals recently supplemented by the Climate and Resilience law:

- To reach 50% sustainable, high-quality products, including 20% "organic" on plates by 1 January 2022,
- To increase the diversification of protein sources
- To replace plastic packaging,





- To continue to control food waste,
- To improve user information.

This platform is now the key channel for information, assistance and provision of support resources (guides, information, practical tools, etc.), for actors in institutional catering. It currently has almost **800 users, all involved in institutional catering**. In November 2021, this start-up entered an **acceleration phase** in its development, aiming to expand its user base.

The institutional catering sector is the spearhead, along with regional food projects, for the deployment of the national food policy.

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## WITHDRAWAL AND RECALL OF SALMONELLA-CONTAMINATED "FUET" SAUSAGE

In 2021, the DGAL's Sanitary Emergencies Unit (MUS) was asked by Public Health France (SpF) to investigate a cluster of 45 cases of salmonellosis (including 27 children) identified by the National Salmonella Reference Centre.

The enquiries were based on a traceability analysis of the products consumed by the patients, with cross-correlation of collected traceability data and official sampling of suspect foodstuffs. The salmonella variants analysed

shared the same genetic characteristics, suggesting a common origin.

Following the enquiry, several batches of "fuet" dry sausage eaten by patients turned out to be contaminated with salmonella. The link between cases of salmonellosis and consumption of "fuets" (a dry sausage product) produced by a Spanish firm was confirmed on 15 July by the General Directorate for Food, the General Directorate of Health and Public Health France (SpF), which took the decision to proceed with the withdrawal/recall of the relevant products from the various store chains.

Where a case of contamination of a food product placed on the market is confirmed, steps of this kind are taken by the DGAL for the protection of consumers and they are published on the RappelConso website.

→ RAPPELCONSO



*Salmonella are bacteria that can cause a foodborne illness: salmonellosis. In most cases the infection is relatively minor, but it can occasionally take more serious forms that require hospitalisation.*



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## ILLICIT SALES OF YOGHURT UNSUITABLE FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION: FAILURES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF BY-PRODUCTS

At the end of 2019, a major French corporation in the dairy industry informed the French National Veterinary and Phytosanitary Investigation Unit (BNEVP) of the misuse of manufacturing by-products unsuitable for human consumption. Action by the BNEVP led the company to make changes to its procedures to avoid any future illicit marketing of non-compliant products.

The corporation had informed the sanitary authorities that jellied milk originating in its manufacturing processes but withdrawn from any human consumption due to microbial non-compliance, had been placed on sale by a low-cost liquidation store in northern France.

Alerted to this suspected fraud involving misuse of foodstuffs of animal origin deemed unsuitable for human consumption, the DGAL's BNEVP decided to open an official enquiry into the by-products on the firm's premises.

This enquiry, conducted in 2020-2021 across all sites of the corporate group, specifically set out to identify potential operational anomalies possibly favouring misuse of the products concerned. The criminal investigation entrusted to the national enquiry unit of the General Directorate for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF) is still ongoing.

The BNEVP's enquiries resulted in the identification of a range of poor practices likely to have contributed indirectly to the reintroduction of these animal by-products into the market for human consumption. The investigation led the company to make changes to its procedures on each of its production sites in order to provide guarantees on the handling of these by-products.

## ABATTOIRS: AN AMBITIOUS PLAN TO RAISE SKILL LEVELS AND STRENGTHEN CHECKS

On 5 July 2021, the Minister of Agriculture and Food launched an "Abattoir Plan" with three core components: modernisation, stronger controls and penalties, and upgraded job prospects.

The first task is to invest massively in abattoirs, most notably using the Economic Recovery Plan under which €115m has been earmarked for their modernisation. Over 120 projects have been selected across France with the aim of improving not only the protection of animals, but also working conditions and resource productivity. These investments will accompany two projects for mobile abattoirs, one already in operation, along with the deployment of CCTV systems in 50 abattoirs for animal protection oversight.

Another priority is to strengthen checks by conducting targeted, coordinated inspections simultaneously across all abattoirs. The first such inspection took place in October 2021 and focused on the conditions in which live slaughter animals were being handled in abattoir livestock housing.

In summary, **882 inspections were carried out in 228 abattoirs** (97% of all abattoirs for meat animals). These inspections led to the detection and processing of often long-standing cases of non-compliance whose correction will be monitored at national level over the course of 2022.





Additionally, a study conducted by the DGAL will make it possible, starting in 2022, to calibrate and target animal protection inspections in abattoirs on the basis of a risk analysis. The objective of this is to improve the efficiency of checks in a context in which the workload of inspectors in abattoirs is under particular pressure.

**The third component of the Plan relates to the application of proportionate and appropriate official procedures and penalties:** the Minister reminded Prefects of

the need to apply penalties for non-compliance discovered during inspections in order to ensure that the failures of the few do not discredit the sector as a whole.

Lastly, a very extensive action plan was set in train in October 2021 to **add value to abattoir inspection careers and to make these jobs more attractive**. The plan, which involves several Ministry directorates, is directed at improving recruitment of abattoir officers, their training and the conditions in which they perform their duties. Work has already begun on ten key areas and the first results are expected as early as 2022.

## A BAPTISM OF FIRE FOR THE NEW ABATTOIR INTERVENTION FORCE

**The National Abattoir Inspection Force (FINA) has been tasked with supporting the Ministry's decentralised departments in dealing with abattoirs affected by proven issues. The Force supplements the "Abattoir Plan" announced by the Minister of Agriculture in 2021.**

This inspection force comprises five experienced veterinarians with national inspection credentials who will intervene at the request of Prefects or the DGAL in order to handle the most difficult cases.

The aim of FINA inspections is to provide a harmonised, external view of the situation in abattoirs slaughtering meat animals, poultry and lagomorphs and to produce a decision-aid document that takes account not only of the animals but also the economic context and the role of the abattoir in regional service coverage.

FINA has been operational since November 2021 and has recently had its framework for action clarified in official technical circulars. Several support programmes are currently ongoing in abattoirs in the Nouvelle-Aquitaine and Auvergne Rhône-Alpes regions. Other inspections will be conducted in the first quarter of 2022 in abattoirs identified by the DGAL in order to obtain a more detailed picture regarding unfavourable assessments filed by local inspection departments and to propose an appropriate action plan.



[GO TO THE PRESS RELEASE](#)







## 3



## Animal health and protection

The DGAL provides surveillance and prevention of animal diseases, control measures where they are seen to be necessary and policy to reinforce good animal welfare practice on livestock farms, as well as for pets.

## AVIAN INFLUENZA: ONE CRISIS GIVES WAY TO THE NEXT

**In the wake of the avian influenza epizootic in the winter of 2020-2021 that hit south-western France, particularly the fattened ducks and geese sector, a new common roadmap was defined in July 2021, detailing the steps to be taken by both the industry and central and regional government departments. This set out the lessons to be learned from the past crisis with a view to preventing the occurrence or the impacts of a new crisis.**

- Two official orders published in September 2021 strengthened the preventive measures. The first defined the parts of Metropolitan France in which the avian influenza virus is highly likely to spread between farms. These areas are described as high-risk zones (ZRD). The second order is aimed at strengthening biosecurity on farms holding poultry or captive birds.
- The DGAL, working with experts, has defined disease control scenarios and a doctrine for the use of depopulation as a preventive measure. These are intended to assist in the definition of a control strategy.
- Professionals in the foie gras industry have also set out to reduce stocking density in the run-up to the autumn in the zones affected by previous crises.

### A FURTHER EPISODE IN NOVEMBER 2021

At a time when the avian influenza virus was in active circulation in Europe, carried by migrating birds, since the summer of 2021, on 26 November last France detected an outbreak of a highly pathogenic strain (HPAI) in the Nord département. This was the first outbreak identified on a farm since the 2020-2021 epizootic. Since then, the epidemic has spread to the south-west, a region already hit hard by the previous crisis.

The first outbreak of type H5N1 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) was confirmed in the south-west on 16 December on a farm with ducks ready for fattening in the Gers département. In February 2022, there were

more than 350 confirmed outbreaks in France, most in this same region (Gers, Landes, Atlantic Pyrenees).

Surveillance and control measures were immediately implemented around the new outbreaks: rapid depopulation and disinfection, regulatory controls imposed on zones by Prefectures, a ban on movement of poultry in those areas, plus the culling of livestock.

The DGAL immediately activated a crisis unit. Regular meetings were held with representatives of the poultry, duck and geese sectors and the Ministry's decentralised departments, and specifically with the regional directorate of agriculture (DRAAF) for Nouvelle Aquitaine, on which major demands were made yet again for this epizootic.



It is undeniable that the steps taken were not sufficient to limit the spread of the virus, which is very widespread in wild fauna. The eradication measures for the outbreaks were therefore intensified, including the preventive depopulation of farms around the outbreaks, followed later by a mass depopulation programme across the region based on the predetermined scenarios set out in the roadmap. Early in 2022 the trajectory of the infection in the region was on a downward path in terms of numbers of confirmed outbreaks.

### NEGOTIATIONS AROUND CONTINUATION OF EXPORTS

Immediately the first outbreak was detected, France once again lost its avian influenza-free status which it had regained in September 2021.

The DGAL immediately informed the international community of this in compliance with World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) obligations and procedures. In parallel, with the support of the network of agricultural advisers in France's embassies, a specific, transparent dialogue was initiated with the veterinary authorities of the importing countries in order to keep them informed of the evolving situation and to preserve the trust necessary for the continuation of exports from geographical areas deemed to be disease-free.

This was so because the zoning strategy put in place by France since the episodes of 2015-2017 has made it possible to reassure importing countries and avoid certain total embargoes. The results of the efforts devoted to obtaining zoning agreements were therefore beneficial: of 27 total embargoes in 2016-2017, only 14 were registered at the time of this episode.

The French General Council on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas (CGAAER) recalled in a report in July 2021 that "the application and development of zoning agreements has made a substantial reduction possible in the harm done to exports, from an average of €120m in the two previous crises to just under €20m in 2020-2021."

## AFRICAN SWINE FEVER: THE THREAT CONTINUES

**Nearly forty cases of African Swine Fever (ASF) have been confirmed since the beginning of January 2022 in wild boar in the north-west of Italy a hundred or so kilometres from the French border. This viral disease is not hazardous for human beings but is highly contagious and fatal in pigs and boar. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food has called for vigilance on the part of all involved, in addition to strict adherence to biosecurity measures in order to protect French territory and the pig industry.**

The disease has been present in wild fauna and on some livestock farms in Eastern Europe since 2014, and it established itself in the eastern regions of Germany in 2020, where three outbreaks were detected on farms after Belgium was affected in 2018. The Caribbean is also involved since the detection in the summer of 2021 of numerous outbreaks in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, placing the French West Indies in a state of heightened vigilance.



### PREVENTION CAMPAIGNS

The geographical proximity of the Dominican Republic to France's overseas communities and regions in this area of the world, along with the existing links via air and maritime travel between the territories, have led preventive measures to be stepped up throughout the region. Action to raise awareness has been taken, targeting pig farmers and travellers, in conjunction with Customs, most notably by the Guadeloupe's local agriculture and food directorate (DAAF) with the aim of preventing the arrival of the virus in Guadeloupe.

The disease is transmitted by infected animals as well as equipment, vehicles and individuals that have been in contact with infected animals. It can also be transmitted by meat and prepared meat products from infected animals, and which may be consumed by pigs and boar.

Considering the cases seen in several European countries, last November the DGAL relaunched its annual "African Swine Fever: act to prevent" awareness campaign targeting livestock farmers, hunters and travellers, all of whom can play a key role in preventing the disease.



France is free of the disease at the present time. The campaign recalls that it is essential to preserve the pig industry by adopting the right preventive procedures. Since the appearance of cases in wild boar in northern Italy, surveillance of boar and livestock farms has been stepped up, especially in the Provence-Riviera region, in conjunction with sectoral organisations and the Ministry's decentralised departments. Messages were broadcast early in 2022 on motorway radio stations and placed in the local press.

### COLLECTIVE MOBILISATION AROUND THE ACTION PLAN

An Action Plan involving public- and private-sector partners has been defined under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food around three pillars: **prevention, surveillance and preparations for control** in the event that the virus arrives in France. Execution of this Plan includes the immediate mobilisation of all involved and the rapid deployment of measures. It targets pig industry professionals (farmers, holders of boar and pigs, transporters, etc.), hunters, local actors and travellers. The Action Plan can be found here:



It continues to be imperative to abide by the biosecurity measures at national level. The risk that the virus may be brought into the country by transport and travel flows from Eastern Europe, carried on contaminated foodstuffs, represents a constant threat to the pig industry across the entire country.

### FRANCE-CHINA AGREEMENT ON RECOGNITION OF ZONING

**An agreement on recognition of zoning and compartmentalisation benefiting France was signed in mid-December by Minister Julien Denormandie and the relevant Chinese ministers.**

Since the agreement comes into force immediately on signing, it will allow exports to China to continue for pig products coming from areas of France that are free of African Swine Fever (ASF), if a case of swine fever occurs.



The agreement is the first of its type to be signed by China in favour of a country in the European Union. It allows French pig industry commercial outlets to be preserved if cases of African Swine Fever do appear. This type of "zoning" agreement can be signed with other countries for other sectors.

## ANIMAL PROTECTION: MAJOR PROGRESS

### MANDATORY DESIGNATION OF A PERSON OF REFERENCE ON EACH LIVESTOCK FARM

Work in this area in conjunction with industry organisations led at the end of December 2021 to the publication in the *Journal Officiel* of a government order detailing the procedures for the designation of such a person of reference. This provision has been in force since 1 January 2022. It is aligned with ministerial announcements in favour of protection and improvement of animal welfare



**in January 2020. It is directed at reinforcing the use of good practice on farms by raising awareness and training those in contact with livestock.**

The obligation to designate a person of reference for animal welfare as of 1 January 2022 applies to all livestock farms, including those raising domestic carnivores and captive wild fauna. The persons concerned are to be designated by the farm manager(s).

Specifically, the official order lays down the obligations related to training, which cover at present only the poultry (not including rabbits) and pig industries. The individuals designated on pig and poultry farms will have six months starting on 1 January 2022 to commence their



training programme, which they will then have 18 months to complete.

In light of ongoing efforts since early 2018, certain training courses attended previously may be granted recognition as representing a part of the required training.

→ [GO TO FAQ](#)



## A BAN ON LIVE CASTRATION OF PIGLETS

**Since 1 January 2022, live castration of piglets has been banned in France. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food has published a ministerial order and a technical circular setting out the conditions for recourse to the castration of male domestic pigs on farms for purposes other than therapeutic or diagnostic.**

In 2020, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food gave an undertaking to halt live castration of piglets by the end of 2021. An initial order was signed in February 2020 prohibiting live castration from 1 January 2022 and regulating castration, to include an obligation to treat pain felt by the piglet. This initial order was supplemented by a further order and a technical circular in November 2021.

Technical assistance for livestock farmers and veterinarians has been provided on the French pig industry (IFIP) website:



## BANDONMENT OF PETS: AN ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE TO CALLS FOR PROJECTS UNDER THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN

**Refurbishment and enlargement of shelter facilities, acquisition of animal welfare equipment, support for sterilisation campaigns for stray cats and dogs: calls for projects in France's territorial *départements* closed at the end of January 2022 having met with great success, with the submission of very large numbers of applications.**

The initial budget of €14m for the support of local projects promoted by animal protection non-profits was topped up with a further €15m in October 2021. This reinjection of funds from the Economic Recovery Plan allocation for combating abandonment was a response to real demand in the field and was warmly welcomed by animal protection associations.

The successful applicants will be named in the spring of 2022. This second call for projects was designed to assist entities that had not applied for the first funding envelope, to highlight sterilisation campaigns with a 100% subsidy for the cost of the veterinary procedure (compared with 50% in the previous call), and to broaden the scope of potential beneficiaries to include so-called “no shelter” non-profits that place abandoned animals with pet foster families.



In 2021, under the first funding envelope of the French government's Economic Recovery Plan has earmarked for this measure, over 330 projects promoted by animal shelter and protection associations received support from the Plan in a total amount of €14m.

These measures are part of a general action plan against pet abandonment presented in December 2020 by the Minister, Julien Denormandie, and implemented by the DGAL.

## A ROADMAP FOR NATIONAL VETERINARY COVERAGE: PROGRESS TO BE CONSOLIDATED

A meeting between the Minister, professional veterinary bodies and local government representatives in October 2021 resulted in an overview of progress to date on the roadmap defined in 2017 for encouraging veterinarians to remain in rural areas.

Certain local areas lack veterinarians, especially in the countryside. This is an important issue for the early detection of disease and monitoring the sanitary and economic performance of animal industries, as well as more generally for maintaining farming activities in, and the attractiveness of local regions.

Since then, work has begun on numerous topics to encourage the retention of veterinarians in local areas and to foster the digital transition in livestock farming, with some concrete results.

→ POUR EN SAVOIR PLUS SUR  
LES ACTIONS RÉALISÉES



The following are among the topics on which work will be continuing: contractualisation, delegation of veterinary procedures, prophylactic procedure pricing and constant sanitary monitoring.

At the beginning of 2022 the roadmap has continued to be rolled out with the publication of the call for declarations of interest in implementing diagnostic schemes and regional action plans. Any local area wishing to act to stem the loss of rural veterinarians has had until 15 March 2022 to submit its application to France's national veterinary association. Six selected volunteering areas will in this way benefit from a diagnostic review of their situation (an assessment of the quality and quantity of veterinary service supply and demand from farms) and will be able to co-construct an action plan to match their needs.



## AN INVESTIGATION INTO VETERINARY MEDICINE TRAFFICKING

In the area of veterinary pharmaceuticals, the DGAL's investigation unit, the BNEVP, participated in enquiries into a trafficking ring importing veterinary drugs from Spain. We look below at this investigation, which may soon result in convictions.

In the spring of 2021 two national Gendarmerie police units – the Central Office for Harm to the Environment and Public Health (OCLAESP) and the Enquiries Unit (SR) in Pau – received information leading them to suspect the existence of trafficking in medicines, notably antibiotics, between Spain and France.

A Spanish veterinarian was apparently issuing prescriptions to French livestock farmers to allow them to obtain illegal supplies of drugs from two ventas in the Navarre area.





The drugs included antimicrobials of critical importance, as well as medicines whose use is restricted to veterinarians due to their hazardous nature if accidentally self-injected.

The system, which had been in place for months, allegedly enabled the French farmers involved to bring large quantities of List I and II pharmaceuticals illegally into France. There are also suspicions of the illegal practice of veterinary medicine by the farmers.

The public prosecutor's office in Bayonne initiated a preliminary enquiry last June, in which the National Veterinary and Phytosanitary Investigation Unit (BNEVP) took part.

On 23 November 2021, a policing operation targeting seven managers and joint managers of four farms was finally organised. This was successful. The case is now in the hands of the courts.

The BNEVP recalls the following:

- **The veterinary care protocol does not permit farmers to provide treatment themselves:** the protocol is not a substitute for veterinary prescriptions, which in any case must necessarily be issued following diagnosis by the farm's designated veterinarian. It must also identify precisely the animals for which the treatment is intended.
- **Farmers are not permitted to diagnose their livestock themselves,** even if they are – or believe they are – very familiar with the disease.
- **Farmers are not authorised to choose treatments themselves** from among the veterinary drugs in their possession.

Furthermore, the police searches of premises revealed the presence of numerous out-of-date medicines with packaging opened at an undefined past date and therefore potentially in a degraded condition.

Such illegal practice of veterinary medicine by livestock farmers is likely to promote numerous phenomena of resistance to medicinal drugs, both antimicrobials and antiparasitics.

**Every year, antimicrobial resistance causes nearly 6,000 deaths nationally (i.e. twice the road accident fatality rate) and 700,000 worldwide.**

→ **LEARN MORE**



## **TAKING DOWN A HATCHING EGGS TRAFFICKING RING: SUCCESSFUL CROSS- BORDER COOPERATION!**

**In April 2021, Belgium's Federal Food Safety Agency (AFSCA) passed on to the BNEVP a well-documented anonymous tip concerning criminal activity at an egg hatchery in France's Nord département. Based on these indications, the BNEVP and AFSCA submitted a case to the relevant prosecutors' offices. A preliminary enquiry was launched, and this led an end to be put to the traffic.**



The manager of the facility is also the owner and operator of four facilities in Belgium. Following several cross-border coordination meetings, a very extensive operation involving the Gendarmerie, the tax authorities, customs and the Belgian and French sanitary authorities began on 1 June 2021 on both sides of the border.

The police search later confirmed the offences identified in the complaint: falsification of traceability documentation, illicit intra-EU movements, undeclared and disguised high-capacity incubators, the presence of enormous sums of cash without supporting documentation, and the presence of large quantities of medicinal drugs without documentary justification. A prime example of effective and productive Franco-Belgian cooperation !





# 4



## Plant and environmental health

Surveillance of the sanitary hazards linked to plants and the prevention of disease, while at the same time reducing the use of plant protection products and encouraging reliable alternative solutions: all this helps achieve the DGAL's desired objective of a transition to more sustainable, more ecological farming.



## PLANT HEALTH: THE THREATS REMAIN HIGH

The threats to plant health remain both numerous and high. Central government departments (DGAI, DRAAF, DAAF and Official Sanitary Bodies (OVS)) need to maintain high levels of vigilance for the surveillance of pests harmful to all plants (crops, ornamental plants, productive and decorative trees and bushes).

One of the biggest of these threats continues to be the *Xylella fastidiosa* bacterium, whose spread should be contained in the Occitania region in the coming months. Official surveillance also continues to be intense with regard to the pine wood nematode, a threat for which the Landes woodlands are in the front line. Numerous checks are being carried out not only in pine stands but also on all materials that could potentially be vectors for this pest, e.g. transport pallets, wood packaging and pine bark.

Lastly, a very grave menace is on the horizon to the east of our national borders, with detections of the small Japanese beetle in Switzerland and Germany and an outbreak that has been hitting Italy hard for several years. Once again, the commitment of human and financial resources by central government to cope with these threats is likely to enable earlier detection, which will in turn facilitate the elimination of outbreaks.

The specialist departments also have in their sights new threats linked to emerging plant pests, insects in most cases, in order to avoid any spread potentially harmful to plants and the economic health of the sectors involved.

### XYLELLA FASTIDIOSA: THE RISK REMAINS HIGH

This bacterium, which can attack over 400 plant species, is a major sanitary hazard for both plants and environment. It was detected in France in 2015 and is present in Corsica, the Provence-Riviera region and Occitania. The Ministry's regional departments, in conjunction with the DGAI, are conducting the surveillance and control programmes necessary to contain *Xylella*'s spread.

2021 was the year in which the first surveillance campaign was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the EU plant health regulation which came into force in December 2019. This surveillance is based on a risk assessment and surveillance of vectors in the contaminated zones. In the Provence-Riviera region the contaminated zone remains relatively unchanged despite a hundred or so detections registered in 2021.

The bacterium was detected for the first time on farmland in Corsica (on everlasting, almond trees and one olive tree). In Occitania, sampling revealed around a hundred new outbreaks in the Aude département and one outbreak in the Gard département, largely in habitats of semi-natural type. The objective in 2022 is to set boundaries on the contaminated zone in this region for containment of the bacterium's spread.



In 2021 the Ministry of Agriculture and Food launched an awareness-raising campaign directed not only at travellers but also at sector professionals, recalling the security procedures to be followed with respect to *Xylella*, since the level of risk does in fact continue to be high. The core issue for this communication campaign is to prevent *Xylella fastidiosa* spreading via commercial flows of plants vulnerable to the bacterium and travellers bringing in plants from contaminated zones on their return.



→ GO TO THE DOSSIER  
AND COMMUNICATION KIT



## DETECTION OF A HAZARDOUS VIRUS ON TOMATOES IN NOUVELLE-AQUITAINE

Surveillance of ToBRFV (Tomato Brown Rugose Fruit Virus) organised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food led to confirmation of its presence in July 2021 on the farm run by an agricultural high school in the Lot *département*. This virus, which presents no danger to human beings, attacks vegetables and spreads easily, making control measures essential, especially upstream in the chain, i.e. at the seed production stage.

A traceability investigation into the plants and the seeds from which they came was initiated immediately in order to determine the origin of the contamination and its extent. Checks were also made by Ministry's regional departments on farms that had received plants from the same batch. Surveillance was also stepped up on farms in the vicinity of the contaminated zone. The infected plants were destroyed and the surroundings disinfected.

While the origin of the contamination currently remains in doubt, although it was very probably due to an isolated seed carrying the virus, no further detections of ToBRFV were reported to the DGAL by the decentralised departments (DRAAF, SRAL) in the course of the investigation or the sampling programme.

The outbreak in the Lot *département* is now considered by the central administration to have been eradicated.

An initial outbreak in France was discovered in Brittany in early 2020 and this has since been eradicated through joint action by sector professionals and central government.

This virus is mainly spread by plants and seeds, as well as by human activities (handling, tools, etc.). It is easily spread simply by physical contact.

During 2021, seeds and plants contaminated with ToBRFV and originating in other EU Member States have been identified and withdrawn from the market, which has forestalled the appearance of other outbreaks.

Given the spread of the virus in the European Union in 2021, especially in the Netherlands, the Member States and the Commission have drafted a new regulation on the virus with a view to adapting the initial emergency measures applied at the time of the first discoveries. This new text intensifies surveillance of the virus through:

- intensified surveillance and testing of mother plants, and seeds in the case of seed production,
- a substantial increase in the percentage checks on imports of tomato and sweet pepper seeds originating in third countries, especially China and Israel.

## POLLINATORS: AN INTERMINISTERIAL PLAN FOR THEIR PROTECTION

A 2021-2026 action plan to stem the proven decline of pollinating insects, led jointly by the Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, was published for public consultation.

In order to stem the worrying decline in pollinators observed across the country and more widely around the world by the scientific community, the government has decided to scale up the efforts directed at the whole range of pollinating insects, both wild and domesticated, and to support all business sectors and programmes that contribute to protecting them and highlighting their value.

The plan provides for a range of actions, most notably improvements in scientific knowledge, assistance for farmers, beekeepers and foresters, revision of the regulations protecting pollinators when plant protection products are used, and the sharing of good agricultural practice conducive to the protection of these insects.



The first meeting of the monitoring committee for the plan was held in early February 2022, included broad stakeholder representation (40 or so members from all backgrounds) and was led jointly by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry for the Ecological Transition.



→ LEARN MORE

Pillar 5 of the plan provides for a revision of the official order of 28 November 2003 on the conditions for use of plant protection products and the protection of pollinators. **The new order “on the protection of bees and other pollinating insects and the preservation of pollination services when using plant protection products” was published on 21 November** in the *Journal Officiel*. It regulates treatment using plant protection products, notably on crops attractive to pollinators during the flowering season.



→ GO TO “BEE” ORDER



→ GO TO ORDER LISTING “NON-ATTRACTIVE” CROPS

## FRENCH FORESTS IN 2021: TOWARDS AN END TO BARK BEETLE INFESTATIONS?

2021 was marked by a continuation of the sanitary crises affecting French forests.

The bark beetle crisis affecting spruce and pine continued in the French regions of Grand-Est, Burgundy-Franche-Comté and Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, but its scope was limited by cool, wet summer weather. In Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, a large-scale special investigation was conducted over the course of the year in 2021 in order to estimate the health status of pine stands.



The DGAL's forest health department, working with its network of observer/correspondents in the regions, organised a trapping programme for bark beetles (insects) to monitor developments in their emergence and to alert forest owners. It contributed to monitoring the damage caused by the beetles in addition most notably to outbreak identification and sanitary felling, using remote sensing technology.

An official order published on 14 January 2021 extended the period for support for exploitation of woodland affected by bark beetle up to 31 August 2021; the budget earmarked for this scheme was raised from €6m to €12m.

**The DGAL's network of experts and observers was also called upon with regard to dieback in other tree species, most notably beech and Scots pine.** In 2022, a large-scale assessment of the health status of beech will be conducted with a view to evaluating the impact of the summer droughts on this species since 2018.



A scale pest of North American origin was discovered on umbrella pin in the area round Saint-Tropez. The pine tortoise scale (*Toumeyella parvicornis*) was accidentally brought into Italy in 2014. This insect consumes tree sap, leading to the drying out of new shoots, and possibly resulting in dieback of branches or even the entire tree. Close surveillance has been implemented in the contaminated zone.



In the spring of 2021, a network of traps was set up at entry points to the region as part of the programme of surveillance of regulated emerging organisms (SORE). Using a pheromone mix, the traps can capture several families of insects immediately following their potential arrival in goods reception areas. This broad-spectrum trapping has been developed by the French national agricultural research institute's Portrap study.

Taken as a whole, this information makes it possible to target the forest stands to be reconstituted under the major €150m reforestation plan in the government's Economic Recovery Plan.

## SEEDS AND PLANTS: THE AMBITIONS OF THE MINISTRY'S NEW PLAN

In connection with the Global Conference on Green Development of Seed Industries organised by the FAO on 4-5 November 2021, the Minister of Agriculture and Food announced the launch of the new Seeds & Plants plan for sustainable agriculture.

Seeds and plants form the very foundation of agricultural production. They represent a key lever for action to meet the challenges posed by climate change, the sustainability of modes of production and the necessary strengthening of our food sovereignty.

The new version of the Plan, originally launched in 2008 and renewed in 2016, provides for a few strictly defined actions organised around four operational pillars:

- Diversity of varieties and species.
- High-quality food protective of the environment.
- Participatory programmes and the use of novel techniques.
- Scientific expertise placed at the service of the public authorities and society.

The plan places specific emphasis on the role of seeds in crop diversity. Programmes that promote the preservation of genetic resources will be reinforced.



The plan is also structured around the objectives of the EU's "Farm to Fork" strategy, which identifies seeds as a key lever for a successful transition to farming that is more sustainable and adapted to changes in the climate.

In order to help increase food quality, the plan notably provides for a stricter evaluation of taste and nutritional criteria (e.g. levels of omega 3, proteins). The plan also provides support for the structuring of the plant protein industries with a view to regaining protein sovereignty, which will be advantageous both economically and environmentally.



→ GO TO THE PRESS RELEASE  
AND PLAN

## SUPPORTING REDUCTIONS AND REGULATING THE USE OF PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS

### GUARANTEED INDEPENDENCE OF ADVICE FOR FARMERS: SEPARATING ADVICE FROM SALES

Starting in January 2021, as part of the separation of sales and advisory activities relating to plant protection products, two forms of advice (strategic and specific) have been defined for producers. The latter are expected to help reduce the use, risks and impacts of plant protection products and to adhere to the principles of integrated crop protection.

### THE ECOPHYTO II+ PLAN

#### An encouraging downward trend in the sales of plant protection products

The two indicators used by the Ecophyto plan were published in July 2021: Number Of Unit Doses (NODU) for 2019 and an interim figure for the amount of active substances sold (QSA) for 2020. Following an increase of 23% between 2017 and 2018, NODU 2019 stood at 78.8Mha, 37% down on 2018 and by 12% since 2009. Where QSA is concerned, sales stood at 44,036 tonnes (not including substances permitted in organic farming and biocontrol products), a figure 20% below the average for the years 2012-2017.

> A significant result: in 2020, substances of greatest concern (CMR1) were reduced by 93% from their level in 2016.

The annual update report on the status of the activity and results of the Ecophyto plan has been published. It goes over in detail what was accomplished in the years 2019-2020 and describes the major progress obtained in 2021.



The interpretation of these indicators will be developed further with the setting up of a new body, the Scientific and Technical Committee (CST).

#### Strengthened, reaffirmed governance

The Scientific and Technical Committee (CST) of the Ecophyto II+ plan was set up in June 2021. Its purpose is to provide regular monitoring of the plan's indicators along with a more comprehensive interpretation of changes in them over time. This committee is also tasked with improving the evaluation of the accomplishments, results and impacts of action under the plan in terms of reductions in the use of plant protection products.

The end of 2021 also featured a meeting of the major plan organisations.

In October 2021, there was a **restricted-format Task Force meeting** led by Prefect Pierre-Etienne Bisch, no-

tably attended by the central administrative departments, APCA, ACTA and INRAE, the aim being to present the sales figures for plant protection products and the various ongoing schemes (PIA4, Economic Recovery Plan, etc.) contributing to an abandonment of plant protection products.

In November 2021, the **Ecophyto II+ strategic orientation and monitoring committee (COS) met**. A presentation was provided of the development of the NODU 2019 and QSA 2020 indicators, in addition to a reaffirmation of interministerial governance. This meeting also allowed closer links to be established between Ecophyto and other schemes of current relevance such as the Pollinators Plan.

### EXPANSION OF THE CEPP CERTIFICATE SCHEME (PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCT SAVING CERTIFICATES)

The purpose of this programme is to involve the distributors of plant protection products in reducing the use and impact of those substances.

The CEPP scheme was set up on an experimental basis in 2016 and was made partially mandatory in 2020 before becoming fully mandatory in 2021.

Several changes are already provided for in legislation or regulations as of 1 January 2022: an expansion of the list of substances included in calculations of obligatory requirements, enlargement of the scope of those to whom the obligations apply, and inclusion of France's overseas territories by 1 January 2023 at the latest.

The official decree proposed for public consultation over the period 20 September to 10 October 2021 – which includes a range of provisions for adaptation of the rules applicable to CEPPs – adds further detail to the scheme in Metropolitan France and its overseas territories for the years 2022 and following.



## MORE PROTECTION FOR PEOPLE IN THE VICINITY OF PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCT APPLICATION AREAS

The law of 30 October 2018, known as the “EGAlim” law, introduced specific provisions relating to the protection of neighbouring populations when plant protection products are being used; these have applied since 1 January 2020. They are based on dialogue at local level and the establishment of charters of commitments by users.

The details of implementation were set out in December 2019, but in July 2021 France’s *Conseil d’État* gave the government six months to adjust and supplement the scheme in certain respects. Responding to this, the government published on 25 January 2022 texts amending the decree and the official order of 27 December 2019.



Those texts were submitted to a public consultation process from 21 December 2021 to 11 January 2022 inclusive.

The amending decree and order proposed for this consultation are intended to meet the request from the *Conseil d’État*.

- The draft decree establishes a new procedure for defining and approving users’ charters of commitments as provided in Article L. 123-19-1 of the French Environmental Code

Additionally, it provides that such charters must necessarily detail **the arrangements for informing local residents and others present prior to use** of plant protection products.

- The proposed official order extends the scope of the provisions for protection of persons residing near areas under treatment to include persons working regularly in the vicinity.

**Regarding the safety distances applicable to substances classed as CMR category 2, the government has opted for an approach based on scientific evaluation, this being the most protective option.** The relevant substances are those whose marketing authorisation does not yet specify safety distances.

Consequently, the government has asked the French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES) to ensure speedier updating of the authorisation of the relevant products to include specific safety distances. From 1 October 2022, products not covered by an admissible application to ANSES will in principle be subject to a non-reducible regulatory safety distance of 10m.



→ GO TO THE PRESS RELEASE

## REGULATED DEROGATIONS FOR THE USE OF NEONICOTINOID-TREATED BEET SEEDS

An official order was published on 1 February in the *Journal Officiel* permitting the use of sugar beet seeds treated with neonicotinoids solely for a period of 120 days during the coming sowing campaign.

In the absence of an effective alternative solution suitable for large-scale use from 2022, this derogation is based on scientific criteria and has received a favourable opinion from the Supervisory Council set up under the law of 14 December 2020, which met on 21 December 2021 to consider the derogation. It is temporary (120 days) and strictly controlled.





In accordance with the ANSES opinions issued on 6 October 2021 and 13 December 2021, the official order strictly regulates the crops sown following a beet crop treated with neonicotinoids in order to protect pollinators. **All other uses of neonicotinoids are and will continue to be banned in France.**

A public consultation process was initiated for the period 24 December to 16 January 2022.

[→ LEARN MORE](#)

#### Development of alternatives to neonicotinoids in anticipation of derogation withdrawal

In December 2020, the government launched a national research and innovation plan (PNRI) with the intention of preparing for the definitive abandonment of neonicotinoids from the 2024 growing season onwards, based on the identification and deployment of alternatives to coated seeds for sugar beet growers. The government earmarked €7m for this research programme, funding 21 projects and involving numerous actors. Several solutions immediately emerged to allow beet growers to dispense with neonicotinoids by 2024 in order to address the risk of yellowing, the main threat to beet crops: the use of secondary crops to repel aphids, the implementation of agroecological infrastructure in the vicinity of beet fields, varietal selection, biocontrol involving the use of chemical mediators and recourse to natural predators for aphids, among others.

[→ GO TO THE PRESS RELEASE](#)

#### DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES TO PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS: THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR BIOCONTROL ROLL-OUT

Launched in November 2020, France's national strategy for the roll-out of biocontrol is intended to accelerate the development of this agro-industrial sector. A plenary session took place on 7 December 2021 attended by all stakeholders. This provided a

description of the monitoring indicators, notably including the percentage increases in applications covered by at least one biocontrol solution between 2020 (40%) and the end of 2021 (54%). This substantial progress was in line with the more general objective of reducing dependence on plant protection products.



## A NATIONAL PLAN FOR EMERGENCY SANITARY INTERVENTION (PNISU) AGAINST PLANT PESTS

This plan prepares and organises the strategic and operational response of central government departments and agencies where the presence of a quarantine or emerging pest requiring control measures is either suspected or confirmed on French territory.

There are over 200 quarantine pests requiring the use of control measures in compliance with EU regulations. Among them are quarantine pests of priority importance: *Xylella fastidiosa*, *Popillia Japonica* (Japanese beetle), *Anoplophora glabripennis* (Asian longhorn beetle), etc. are subject to close vigilance on the grounds that their potential economic, environmental and social impacts are the greatest.

The Plan sets out the general principles for the preparation and implementation of control measures against quarantine and emerging pests. It will be accompanied as and when appropriate by technical information sheets and guides describing the role of each actor, the control measures to be put in place for all quarantine pests, as well as specific documentation concerning priority quarantine pests in order to ensure the best possible reaction to their potential presence in the country.

This body of documentation will serve as a basis for the application of an exercise and training policy, all of which will contribute to the task of raising the awareness of stakeholders and the general public for improved knowledge of the risks associated with these quarantine pests, in addition to the development of generally applied good practice.



## ILLEGAL TRADE IN BONSAI: A FIRM CONVICTED FOR NON-COMPLIANCE WITH SANITARY REQUIREMENTS

In June 2018, the Ministry's regional departments (in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes) informed the DGAL's investigation unit (BNEVP) of suspicions of trafficking in bonsai involving several businesses based in south-western France. Following police enquiries, one of the operators was convicted in April 2021. Failure to comply with sanitary requirements, specifically when importing plants, can lead to the introduction of diseases and parasites to our country and EU territory, causing harm to plant health.

This penalty in criminal law was additional to the administrative sanction involving the destruction of the plants illegally imported into France from Japan via Italy (approximate market value €400,000).

An official investigation conducted by the National Veterinary and Phytosanitary Investigation Unit (BNEVP) and the staff of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes regional directorate for agriculture and food (DRAAF) led to evidence of illegal imports of numerous plants (bonsais) into the European Union and France, arriving directly from Japan. Some were covered by a complete ban on imports to our territory; others did not comply with quarantine periods prior to entry.

The introduction into Europe, more specifically into Italy, of these plants involved an Italian importer acting as an intermediary with the Japanese supplier. False documentation was produced.

All the illegally imported plants were subject to official seizure and a destruction order. A police enquiry conducted by the *Gendarmerie* with BNEVP input began in January 2020.

This investigation led to a search of the premises of the two firms involved in the traffic and one company manager was criminally charged. Having admitted to the offences, he was able to appear before the court after pleading guilty, ultimately receiving a three-month suspended prison sentence.





## COURT CONVICTIONS FOR MARKETING, HOLDING AND USING A BANNED PESTICIDE

In 2020, the BNEVP, the DGAL's investigation unit, took part in a police enquiry involving carrot growers and market gardeners accused of using a banned plant protection product. The resulting court case was heard in May 2021 and resulted in two convictions in September 2021.

Thirteen individuals appeared in court. Two were answering charges of conspiracy to place on the market plant protection products not covered by any authorisation, in addition to advertising and recommending the products concerned. The market gardeners were prosecuted for holding and using plant protection products not covered by a marketing authorisation from February 2018 to November 2020.



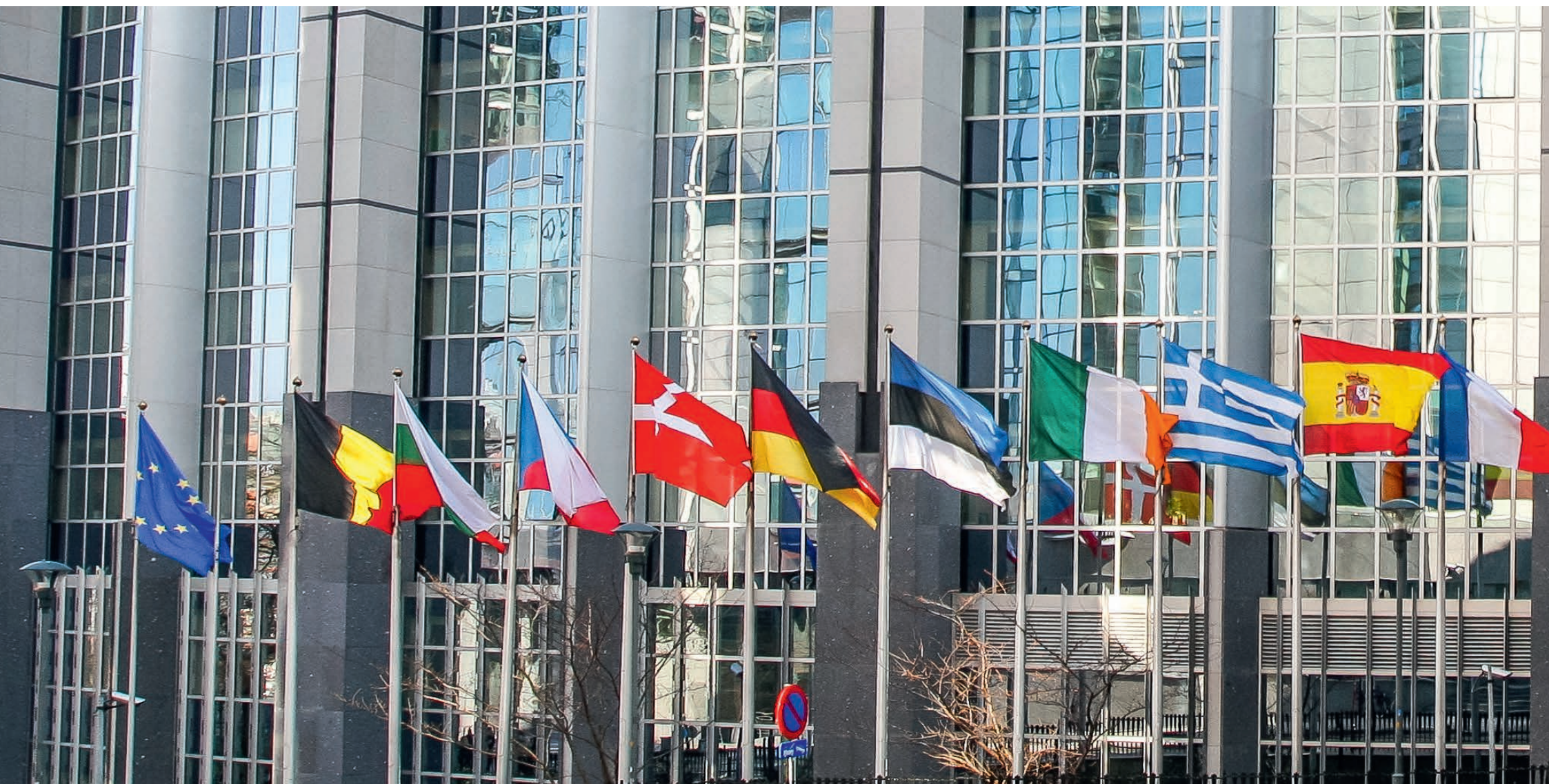
All except one of the accused were found guilty and received fines in varying amounts ranging from several thousand euros to several tens of thousands of euros. The largest fines were imposed on the main organisers of the illicit supply: the intermediary who ordered the product from Spain, the operator grouping the orders and carrying out the deliveries, and the agricultural contractor who applied the product at night.

After the verdicts, handed down in the first instance, all those convicted except the local marketer decided to lodge appeals. The case will therefore be heard a second time, this time before the Appeal Court.

The above penalties in criminal law are additional to the administrative sanctions involving destruction of the carrots grown in the fields previously treated with the banned substance.







## 5



## A look at the French presidency of the EU

France's Presidency of the Council of the European Union commenced on 1 January 2022 for a term of six months, ending on 30 June 2022. During this period, France is responsible for organising and following up on meetings of the Council's groups, carrying on from the work done by previous presidencies.



## THE FRENCH PRESIDENCY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ADVOCACY OF OUR POSITIONS

2021 was a year in which the DGAL prepared what is a rare set of events, one that will not be repeated until 2035. Starting in July 2021, the DGAL EU Presidency Steering Committee met twice a month, supplemented from the end of October by a weekly meeting of the EU Presidency Steering Committee with the Minister's private office.



**The Council of the European Union**, also called the "Council of the Ministers of the European Union" or the "Council" is attended by the government ministers of the Member States of the European Union according to their individual remits. It is, alongside the European Parliament, the joint legislator of the European Union.

## DEFINING AN AGENDA, SCHEDULING MEETINGS

With the support of the General Secretariat for European Affairs (SGAE) and France's Permanent Representation in Brussels, the preparatory work began, where the DGAL is concerned, with the identification and planning of the meetings of the preparatory bodies of the AGRIFISH Council that fall within the DGAL's official remit, while



Informal meeting of the EU Ministers of Agriculture, 7-9 February 2022 in Strasbourg

also defining the legislative and non-legislative initiatives that could be tabled in those bodies.

Certain Council meetings recur from one presidency to the next, such as those of the Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs), those of the Chief Officers of Plant Health Services (COPHS), and the meetings of the Potsdam (animal-related exports) and Roosendaal (plant-related exports) groups. Others are made necessary by the European Commission's legislative agenda, e.g. meetings of the working group for revision of Directive 2009/128/EC on the use of pesticides compatible with rural development, known as the "SUD Directive" (a legislative pro-

posal scheduled for the end of March 2022). And lastly, other meetings are for the coordination of the EU's positions vis-à-vis international organisations (World Organisation for Animal Health – OIE, Codex Alimentarius, International Plant Protection Convention – IPPC, and the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation – EPPO, OECD). This means that forty or so meetings will need to be chaired by the DGAL during the six months of the French Presidency of the European Union.

## HIGHLIGHTING FRANCE'S PRIORITIES

The priorities to be highlighted by the DGAL in these Council groups were defined and refined throughout 2021 in meetings and preparatory bilateral discussions with other Member States, the European Commission and our interlocutors in the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC).

Those priorities have been presented from December 2021 and include the following:

- Support for reciprocity with regard to environmental and sanitary production standards between EU products and products imported from third countries.
- Pesticides and revision of the SUD Directive.
- EU influence in multilateral standardisation bodies such as the Codex Alimentarius.
- Consideration of a strategy for recourse to vaccination for control of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza.
- Animal welfare on livestock farms: sharing of experience to provide input for the European Commission in drafting the texts expected for 2023.
- Consideration of two reports by the Commission containing an overview of the application of the plant health law to both imports and intra-EU trade (phytosanitary passport).

## EVENTS LED OR CO-LED BY THE DGAL:

- The ministerial antimicrobial resistance conference on 7 March 2022, in conjunction with the Ministry for Solidarity and Health.
- A seminar on epidemiological surveillance platforms scheduled for 22 March 2022.
- An informal meeting of Chief Veterinary Officers scheduled for 4-6 May 2022 in Angers.
- A relocated formal meeting of Chief Veterinary Officers scheduled for 14-17 June 2022.

## TRAINING FOR DGAL STAFF

To ensure the best possible preparation for these events in 2022, the focus in the second half of 2021 was mainly on training and preparing DGAL staff for the issues and prerogatives specific to the Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

To that end, the General Secretariat of the Council held training sessions for the group chairs. The French school of administration (ENA) also offered additional training for group chairs and their support staff. The General Secretariat for European Affairs (SGAE) organised regular awareness sessions for all DGAL personnel, not forgetting the awareness webinar arranged for the Ministry's decentralised departments by the central administration's directorates on 20 October.

→ LEARN MORE

→ GO TO THE WEBSITE OF THE FRENCH PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION









## 6



## Inspections, checks and alerts:

### The DGAL in figures

The DGAL has approximately 4,800 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff, with an additional 14,000 government-approved sanitary veterinarians, 30 national reference laboratories and around 150 specialist testing laboratories, most of which are attached to French territorial *départements*.

The annual surveillance and inspection plans led by the Directorate are implemented by the decentralised departments and involve the taking of over 55,000 samples for testing.

Added to the above are inspections of food chain establishments. The DGAL also handles around a thousand sanitary alerts each year.

**CHECKS ON IMPORTS FROM THIRD COUNTRIES**

Imported products	Numbers of batches checked	Including rejected batches
Animals and animal products	141,310	1,510
Plants and plant products	64,975	1,170
Feed products of non-animal origin	3,640	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>209,925</b>	<b>2,700</b>

**CERTIFICATION OF INTRA-EU TRADE**

		Numbers of checks
Live animals	Certification inspections (exit from territory)	96,725
	Inspections of incoming batches for verification of compliance	325

**ANIMAL HEALTH AND PROTECTION INSPECTIONS**

			...including				
ANIMAL PROTECTION	Numbers of inspections	Follow-up procedures	Official warnings	Official notices to remedy	Penalty notices	Permit withdrawal or suspension	Total or partial establishment closure
<b>TOTAL, comprising:</b>	<b>14,255</b>	<b>4,500</b>	<b>2,560</b>	<b>1,660</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>
Farm livestock	4,515						
Animal transportation	4,970						
Pets	1,580						
Equine animals	945						
Animal laboratory trials	265						
Abattoir inspections	1,980						

			...including				
PUBLIC HEALTH ON LIVESTOCK FARMS	Numbers of inspections	Follow-up procedures	Official warnings	Official notices to remedy	Penalty notices	Permit withdrawal or suspension	Total or partial establishment closure
<b>TOTAL, comprising:</b>	<b>16,620</b>	<b>2,390</b>	<b>1,605</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>
On-farm sanitary Inspections	1,615						
Biosecurity	1,900						
Salmonella	8,675						
Identification	1,810						
Veterinary medicines	1,310						
Animal by-products	665						
Animal feed	175						
Reproduction	220						
Trade in livestock	250						

**ANNUAL SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME FOR CONTAMINATION IN PRIMARY PRODUCTION, FOOD AND FEED**

The results for the 2021 will be available in the PSPC 2021 overview report to be published in September 2022. The surveillance and inspection plans (PS-PC) under DGAL management are directed at ensuring surveillance of contamination of primary animal and crop production, products of animal origin and animal feed.

	Samples taken in 2020	Including samples found to be non-compliant	Sampling scheduled in 2021
<b>TOTAL, comprising:</b>	<b>58,031</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>55,204</b>
Physicochemical contaminants <sup>1</sup> in animal products	50,838	171	49,765
Biological contaminants and toxins in animal products	1,942	16	2,910
Residues of plant protection products in primary crop production	868	89	1,114
Contaminants in products imported from third countries	671	5	3% of imported batches
Antimicrobial resistance in commensal and zoonotic bacteria	3,712	n/a	1,415

**PLANT QUALITY, HEALTH AND PROTECTION INSPECTIONS**

			...including				
	Numbers of inspections	Follow-up procedures	Official warnings	Official notices to remedy	Penalty notices	Permit withdrawal or suspension	Total or partial establishment closure
<b>TOTAL, comprising:</b>	<b>26,235</b>	<b>5,485</b>	<b>3,880</b>	<b>1,345</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>
Inspections of users of plant protection products	5,110						
Inspections at plant protection product distribution stage	580						
Inspections to verify observance of hygiene rules	570						
Checks for issuance of European phytosanitary passports	3,970						
Surveillance of regulated and emerging pests	16,005						

**FOOD SAFETY CHECKS**

			...including					
	Numbers of inspections	Follow-up procedures	Official warnings	Official notices to remedy	Penalty notices	Permit withdrawal or suspension	Total or partial establishment closure	Other measures <sup>3</sup>
<b>TOTAL, comprising:</b>	<b>48,775</b>	<b>26,230</b>	<b>20,480</b>	<b>4,740</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>60</b>
Slaughter <sup>2</sup> , processing and warehousing facilities	16,390	6,290						
Institutional catering	9,835	5,720						
Commercial catering	12,020	8,150						
Retail outlets	10,530	6,070						

1 Includes veterinary medicines, banned substances, growth promoters, pesticides, antiparasitics and trace metals.

2. This figure includes only annual inspections of slaughter facilities where veterinary staff also provide permanent inspection services. In the context of COVID, inspections were maintained as a priority in the facilities presenting the most risk, which include abattoirs. Inspection cutbacks did not involve the facilities most at risk.

3. Mandatory training, sequestration or destruction of goods, cleaning, product recall, modification work on premises, etc.



## A THOUSAND FOOD-RELATED ALERTS HANDLED BY THE SANITARY EMERGENCIES UNIT (MUS)

The DGAL's Sanitary Emergencies Unit (MUS) provides **centralised coordination of the processing of alerts relating to the detection of animal diseases, plant diseases and other hazards** (bacteria, toxins, chemical contaminants, abnormal product aspect, abnormal odour, etc.) in food products placed on the market for human or animal consumption.

Approximately one thousand food-related alerts are handled by the MUS every year.

In addition to handling alerts, the MUS is regularly asked by the health authorities (General Directorate for Health, Public Health France (SpF)) to **coordinate official investigations relating to food or feed products where there are human cases** in which it is suspected that the origin is food- or animal-related.

As an example of this, the MUS intervened in around fifteen human salmonellosis clusters. In general, consumption of dry prepared meats, eggs or products including eggs or poultry meat is usually suspected in cases of salmonellosis.

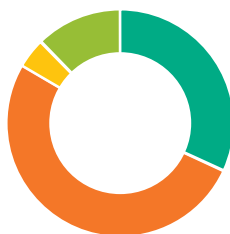
Such investigations occasionally result in the identification of the food or animals that are the source of contamination. However, this is not always the case.

Where enquiries converge on a food product it will be deemed to be hazardous. This will then constitute a food alert and steps will be taken to put an end to human exposure to the hazard: remedial measures on the manufacturer's premises, withdrawal from sale (if the relevant

product is still on the market), information to consumers, etc.

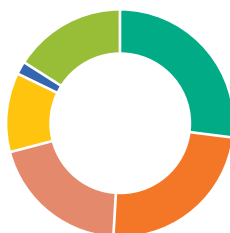
Cf. the alert relating to "fuet" sausage and salmonella => page 25

**2,360** incident reports received by the MUS in 2021 in the following relative proportions:



- Human food
- Human cases (grouped, sporadic or CFTI)
- Animal health (excluding HPAI outbreaks)
- Plant health

**Food contaminations by *Salmonella spp* and *Listeria monocytogenes* are the two most frequent causes of human food-related alerts:**



- Salmonella
- *Listeria monocytogenes*
- Other biological sources (e.g. bacteria, biotoxins)
- Chemical contaminants and residues
- Poor sterilisation
- Other (e.g. foreign bodies, incorrect expiry dates)





## BREXIT: THE SITUATION AFTER ONE YEAR OF SANITARY & PHYTOSANITARY CONTROLS

**The United Kingdom is now considered to be a third country in relation to the European Union and this has involved additional workload for the French border veterinary and phytosanitary inspection service (SIVEP), a DGAL department with a nationwide remit and responsibility for applying sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) controls to imports arriving in the European Union.**

Although the controls commenced on 1 January 2021, the SIVEP had prepared itself well in advance, beginning to reorganise from the end of 2018 with the creation of five new border inspection posts (BIPs) on the Channel coast, in addition to recruiting and training new officers.

Training was provided for 244 officers with the support of the National School of Veterinary Services (ENSV-FVI), the internal school of VetAgro Sup and OIE partner facility for the training of official veterinary officers, and the National Staff Training Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (INFOMA). These courses involved numerous in-house Ministry trainers during both the theoretical and field experience phases. All concerned should be congratulated here on their remarkable level of commitment during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2021, nearly 110,000 consignments were checked at border inspection posts (BIP) on the Channel/North

Sea coast, including over 2,700 every week at the end of the year. Regular increases in traffic have been observed (+8.6% in September, +2.9% in October, +5.7% in November).

Before Brexit was a reality, the SIVEP and its BIPs across France were inspecting nearly 100,000 consignments from everywhere around the world, a figure a little under that represented by the checks on incoming consignments from the United Kingdom in 2021.

Most of the checks are carried out at the BIPs in Calais-Boulogne (85%), Caen-Ouistreham (8%) or Dunkirk (6%). The remainder are at the other BIPs in Roscoff, Saint-Malo, Cherbourg, Le Havre and Dieppe. 54% of inspected goods are heading for other Member States of the European Union.

The goods inspected mainly comprise products of animal origin (83%) and live animals (13%). Plants and animal feed of non-animal origin account for 3% and 1% respectively.

Brexit-related activity represented 52% of all activity at French BIPs in 2021, accounting for 81% of all checks on live animals and 73% of checks on products of animal origin.

Over 1,200 consignments, or 1.14% of the goods inspected were refused admission to the European Union on grounds of non-compliance detected at the time of inspection.

No congestion at entry points was observed thanks to the professionalism of the staff, who made it possible to ensure that border throughput remained fluid, coping with what has been an unprecedented challenge.

## FRANCE SESAME: A DIGITAL PLATFORM TO FACILITATE IMPORTS

**FRANCE SESAME is a free public digital platform launched in November 2021 for smoother, easier execution of official import formalities.**

Those formalities apply to goods entering the territory of the European Union through French ports. They are subject to a range of checks:

- Sanitary & phytosanitary,
- Verification of compliance with marketing standards for fruit and vegetables,
- Verification of adherence to EU organic farming criteria.

**Deployed at the major seaports of Le Havre, Dunkirk and Marseille-Fos, FRANCE SESAME helps ensure that France's ports act as strategic logistical hubs** by offering a modern, relevant solution for the needs of actors in the port ecosystem. FRANCE SESAME was designed in close collaboration with a panel of economic operators based in the relevant port areas.

Thanks to secure Internet access (<https://france-se-same.gouv.fr>), FRANCE SESAME can offer its users (importers, forwarders, customs agents) a personalised space for the use of a bundle of innovative digital services:

- Real-time status reports on progress of official formalities.

- Online arrangement of appointments for physical sanitary & phytosanitary checks.
- Transmission in real time of progress status reports for official formalities.
- Management of a “digital import dossier” centralising the official documents accompanying the execution of border formalities.

FRANCE SESAME is the outcome of an interministerial partnership between the DGDDI (General Directorate of Customs and Indirect Taxation), the DGAL (General Directorate for Food), the DGCCRF (General Directorate for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control) and the DGITM (General Directorate for Infrastructure, Transport and the Sea).



→ GO TO FAQ AND OPERATOR DOCUMENTS









## EXPORTS (OTHER THAN TO EU) OF ANIMAL AND PLANT PRODUCTS IN 2021

Despite a situation in which Covid-19 was continuing to disrupt contacts with the sanitary authorities of third countries (fewer bilateral meetings, few or no visits from delegations from those countries), 2021 was a year in which a number of negotiations came to fruition:

### 24 COMPLETED NEGOTIATIONS, INCLUDING:

# 7

#### MARKET OPENINGS



##### ANIMAL

Thailand / bovine offal  
Australia / raw milk cheese  
Vietnam / egg products  
Japan / Liquid egg products



##### PLANT

Kenya / seed potatoes, Thailand / yellow kiwis, & Thailand / aubergine seeds

# 4

#### MARKET



##### ANIMAL

New Zealand / egg products



##### PLANT

Canada / vine plants, Thailand / apples, Canada / wood

## AUDITS



# 3

#### PLANT-RELATED

> Market opening October 2021 China / apples

> Renewal October 2021 Taiwan / apples, delegated to France

> Market opening November 2021 China / kiwi fruit



# 20

#### ANIMAL-RELATED

> Audits of premises (maintenance of approvals): "COVID" China: over 20 facilities audited in 2021 (across all sectors: bovine meat, pig meat, fisheries products, milk and dairy products)

> Audits of premises (maintenance of approvals): South Korea / dairy products: delegation of audits to France

> Systemic audits

September, November and December 2021: China / African Swine Fever (audit for agreement to zoning)

September 2021: Russia / animal feed (audit for maintenance of equivalence)

# 40

"COUNTRY/PRODUCT" MODEL CERTIFICATES  
CREATED OR REVISED  
IN THE ANIMAL DOMAIN

# 14

IN THE PLANT DOMAIN  
(10 REVISED, 4 NEW).

# 4

#### MARKET REOPENINGS (LIFTING OF EMBARGOES)



##### ANIMAL

Market reopened poultry products after recovery of disease-free status / Avian Influenza (Australia, Taiwan, Singapore)



##### PLANT

China/shallots

# 9

#### MARKET RETENTION



##### ANIMAL

China / COVID; China / ASF zoning; Japan and Russia / HPAI zoning, Russia/ livestock feed, Malaysia / hatching eggs, Pakistan / egg products, Japan/ poultry meat, Ecuador / ruminant semen

# 290,000

SANITARY CERTIFICATES  
ISSUED AT NATIONAL LEVEL

# 80,000

PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATES  
ISSUED AT NATIONAL LEVEL



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