

European Communities

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Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a directive amending Directive No. 80/217/EEC introducing Community measures for control of classical swine fever (Doc. 1-1362/83 - COM(83) 783 final)

Rapporteur: Mr Louis EYRAUD

PE 89.149/fin.
Or. Fr.

By letter of 31 January, the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty, to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a directive amending Directive No. 80/217/EEC introducing Community measures for control of classical swine fever.

On 13 February 1984, the President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Agriculture as the committee responsible.

The committee appointed Mr Louis Eyraud rapporteur.

The committee considered the Commission's proposal and the draft report at its meeting of 20 and 21 March 1984.

At that meeting it decided unanimously to recommend to Parliament that it approve the Commission's proposal without amendment.

The committee then adopted the motion for a resolution as a whole unanimously.

The following took part in the vote : Mr Curry, chairman; Mr Früh and Mr Colleselli, vice-chairmen; Mr Eyraud, rapporteur; Mr Barbagli (deputizing for Mr Diana), Mr Battersby, Mr Dalsass, Mr Fernandez (deputizing for Mr Papapietro), Mr Gatto, Mr Gautier, Mr Helms, Mrs Herklotz, Mr Hutton (deputizing for Mr Simmonds), Mr Jürgens, Mr McCartin (deputizing for Mr Clinton), Mr Maffre-Bangé, Mr Maurice Martin (deputizing for Mr Pranchère), Mr Mertens, Mr B. Nielsen, Mrs Quin, Mr Stella (deputizing for Mr Bocklet), Mr Sutra, Mr Thareau and Mr Vitale.

This report was tabled on 23 March 1984.

The deadline for the tabling of amendments to this report appears in the draft agenda for the part-session at which it will be debated.

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A.

The Committee on Agriculture hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

closing the procedure for consultation of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a directive amending Directive 80/217/EEC introducing Community measures for the control of classical swine fever.

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission to the Council COM(83) 783 final)¹,
 - having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty (Doc. 1-1362/83),
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-54/84),
 - having regard to the result of the vote on the Commission's proposal,
- A. having regard to the worrying situation of pig farms threatened by the spread of classical swine fever, which is continuing to spread rapidly, despite the measures taken so far,
- B. whereas, therefore vigorous action must be taken as a matter of urgency to curtail the spread of this epizootic, and whereas the plans for eradication laid down by the Community must be pursued,
- C. whereas the disease must not, however, be used as a pretext, by the unjustified use of the safeguard clause, to restrict intra-Community trade in live pigs or pigmeat,

¹ OJ No. C 19 26.1.1984, p.6

1. Approves the Commission's proposal in its entirety;
2. Calls on the Commission, nevertheless, to submit a more detailed list of criteria so as to define more accurately what it means by the term 'high risk area' in its proposal;
3. Requests the Commission to take, on this basis, all necessary measures to contain and combat this epizootic as effectively and surely as possible;
4. Calls for the Commission to submit by 30 June 1985 a report to the Council and European Parliament on the results of plans to eradicate the disease and on the course the disease has taken in the Community in 1983 and 1984;
5. Instructs its President to forward to the Council and Commission, as Parliament's opinion, the Commission's proposal as voted by Parliament and the corresponding resolution.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. The campaign against classical swine fever has been one of the Community's large-scale schemes to free its territory of epizootics. The eradication of such diseases is vital both to safeguard human and animal health and to ensure the free movement of goods within the Community.
2. The campaign against classical swine fever within the Community is based at present on three measures:
 - Directive No. 80/217/EEC¹ introducing Community measures for the control of classical swine fever;
 - Directive No. 80/1095/EEC² laying down conditions designed to render and keep the territory of the Community free from classical swine fever;
 - Decision No. 80/1096/EEC³ introducing Community financial measures for the eradication of classical swine fever.
3. Directive 80/217/EEC lays down the general Community rules that are applicable in clinical or suspected cases of CSF. The main requirements of this Directive are the mandatory slaughter and destruction of all pigs on infected holdings, the establishment of a protection zone around the infected holding (2km for 15 days) in which movement of pigs is forbidden except for immediate slaughter, disinfection of the infected premises, identification of the origin and movements of pigs, etc. Vaccination is permitted if a Member State deems it necessary; the type of pigs to be vaccinated and the extent of the vaccination is left to the judgment of the Member State concerned. However, all vaccinated pigs must be permanently and individually marked.

¹ OJ No. L 47, 21.2.1980, p. 11

² OJ No. L 325, 1.12.1980, p. 1

³ OJ No. L 325, 1.12.1980, p. 5

4. Directive 80/1095/EEC provides for decisions to be taken to declare Member States and regions of Member States officially swine-fever free, and also requires Member States which are not officially swine-fever free to prepare and present plans for the eradication of the disease. The plans must cover a five-year period and must include cut-off dates for vaccination and the date of commencement of the swine fever detection campaign (serological testing). Plans have been presented and adopted for Belgium, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany, France and Italy. Greece has also submitted a plan which has been in operation since 1 August 1983. Denmark, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Luxembourg and certain regions of the Federal Republic of Germany have been declared officially swine-fever free. Provisions are also made for 'on-the-spot checks' of the implementation of the plans in Member States.

5. Decision 80/1096/EEC provides for financial aid to Member States for the implementation of eradication plans, for emergency vaccination, for vaccination under a plan, and for measures taken in an officially free Member State, should CSF occur. This EAGGF Guidance Section aid will be granted for a five-year period and will amount to 35 million ECU. The EAGGF Guidance Section will repay Member States:
 1. up to 50% of the cost of slaughter and destruction as paid by the Member States in compensation to the owners of slaughtered animals,
 2. up to 0.125 ECU per animal for emergency or prophylactic vaccination, provided it is part of a plan,
 3. and up to one ECU per sample examined in a laboratory in connection with detection tests.

6. Despite these measures, the safeguard clause in the Directives on trade is still in force; thus it is the right of a Member State to take action to limit the spread of a disease through trade, when it considers that it is endangered because of the occurrence and spread of an animal disease in another Member State. However, such measures should be harmonized by the Commission under the Standing Veterinary Committee procedure. This type of action has been implemented on a number of occasions since the adoption of the CSF eradication plans, for motives sometimes extending beyond the campaign to halt the spread of an epizootic.

7. In 1982, there were 233 outbreaks in the Community involving the slaughter of 113,771 pigs.

In 1983, up to 1 October, there were 670 outbreaks in the Community involving the slaughter of 285,647 pigs, a substantial (+ 151% in the first 9 months), and disturbing increase.

Of the 670 outbreaks occurring up to 1 October 1983, 328 were analysed by type of herd; 218 occurred in fattening herds, 71 in mixed herds (fattening and breeding) and 39 in breeding herds.

Of the same 670 outbreaks, 346 were analysed on the possible origin of the disease: 37 were found to be due to swill, 79 due to movement of animals, 127 due to contact, and in 103 herds the origin was not identified. It has been established that the principal factor responsible for the spread of the disease is the movement of pigs (transport, arrival of piglets in fattening farms); however, man and various animal agencies (dogs, birds, etc.) are also to blame.

8. Community financial aid was made available from the day when the eradication plans were implemented, i.e. 1 January 1982 for Belgium and the Federal Republic of Germany, 1 March 1982 for the Netherlands, 1 June 1982 for France, 1 March 1983 for Italy, and 1 August 1983 for Greece.

In 1982, 113,771 pigs were slaughtered under the plans and the cost to the Community is estimated to have been 4.6 million ECU.

In 1983 (up to 1 October 1983), 285,647 pigs were slaughtered under these plans at an estimated cost to the Community of 12.2 million ECU. This increase in expenditure may be attributed notably to the fact that these measures are being extended to an ever-increasing number of Member States.

9. Classical swine fever was spreading at such an alarming rate that Belgium (November 1982), the Netherlands (April 1983) and the Federal Republic of Germany (July 1983) decided, as envisaged in the basic Directive, to introduce vaccination in certain areas in order to curtail the spread of the infection. This resurgence of CSF has made it impossible to implement the eradication programme as planned in certain areas of the Community.
10. The Commission has attempted to discover why the disease spread so rapidly. Its analysis of the situation is as follows:

(a) In some cases the decision to vaccinate was taken too late to halt the epizootic;

- (b) Due to the nature of the virus itself, it was taking up to 3 weeks and in some exceptional cases up to 40 days after entry of the virus into a herd for the presence of the disease to be confirmed; there was no suspicion of the presence of the virus during the latent phase and in many cases, of course, pigs left the herd during the incubation period, thus creating a ripple effect and transmitting infection to many other herds;
- (c) In some cases time restriction on movement between contiguous premises were too short, and infection was spread by pigs moving after the 15-day restrictive period;
- (d) Some traders were not subject to sufficient surveillance: it is sometimes the practice to collect pigs from many sources, to mix them up and then to sell them off on a gradual basis. However, one cannot really blame the traders because, in view of the low virulence of the virus, neither the traders nor the pig owners were aware of the presence of infection at the time the transaction took place or indeed for some time thereafter.
- (e) Cleaning the disinfection, particularly of lorries, left a lot to be desired, especially as most of the prescribed disinfectants are corrosive;
- (f) There is no Community-level control over the manufacture, distribution and use of vaccines against CSF. As a result the illegal misuse of vaccine, especially in countries where vaccination has become a routine measure, can lead to:
- i. Misdiagnosis of the condition,
 - ii. Creation of carriers,
 - iii. The creation of immuno-incompetent offspring: the creation of a small number of pigs in which field virus is replicating without the appearance of symptoms or presence of antibodies, thus leading again to spread;

It should, however, be noted that there has been a decline in these countries in these illegal or abusive practices; the use of swill, although it is thought that it is a minor factor in the spread of this disease.

- (g) The use of swill although it is thought that it is a minor factor in the spread of this disease;

- (h) The attitude of owners who, with their reliance on past vaccination and in view of the lengthy absence of CSF, did not always take every necessary precaution.
11. The Commission believes that it is possible to curtail the spread of the current CSF epizootic and, to this end, is proposing amendments to Directive 80/217/EEC which can be summarized as follows:
- (a) the period of application of measures in the 2 km protection zone is increased from 15 days to 30 days;
 - (b) the waiting period before restocking of infected holdings is increased from 15 days to 30 days;
 - (c) the manufacture, dispatch, distribution, trade and utilization of vaccines is to be subject to official control;
 - (d) certain areas may be designated as high risk areas in the Community;
 - (e) if it is decided to vaccinate an area then no movement can occur out of the vaccination area during the vaccination operations, after which any movement of vaccinated pigs from the area will be subject to strict rules.
12. Where an epizootic of swine fever is exceptionally serious and is tending to spread, a decision may be taken by the Community to declare a demarcated territorial area a 'high risk' area as mentioned in point 11 (d).

If a pig is transferred to another pig herd either within or outside the high risk area, then the receiving pig herd may not move any pigs out of the herd for a period of 30 days, except for direct slaughter. If it is a pregnant female, then no movement may occur out of the receiving herd for a period of 30 days after farrowing, except for direct slaughter.

13. With these measures, the Commission intends to prevent the spread of the disease so that the plans to eradicate it may continue. It feels that prompt implementation of these measures should enable the objectives pursued by the Community in its eradication plans to be attained. However, in order to prevent any recurrence or spread of the disease, emergency measures will still have to be applied, in addition to the specific swine fever eradication programme, under Decision 77/97/EEC¹ on the financing by the Community of certain emergency veterinary measures. Consequently, having regard to the results obtained, the Commission intends to submit proposals, particularly as regards health protection measures applicable to large pig farms by the creation of production units which are totally separate one from the other and contain a limited number of animals.

The Commission will also ensure, in connection with the implementation of Directive 72/462/EEC² on imports of bovine animals and pigs and of fresh meat from non-member countries, that the guarantees required take account of the health requirements in the Community as regards classical swine fever.

14. The Committee on Agriculture endorses all the Commission's proposals and calls for them to be implemented with immediate effect, in order to halt the spread of classical swine fever and to enable the plans to eradicate it to continue without delay.

¹OJ No. L 26 of 31.1.1977, p. 78

²OJ No. L 302 of 31.12.1972, p. 28