

World Organization for Animal Health Regional Representation for the Middle East

Mission Report

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International Control of Foot-and-Mouth disease,
Tools, trends and perspectives
Paphos, Cyprus- 16-20 October 2006**

1- Objective:

Participation in the Open Session of the Research Group of the European Commission for the Control of Foot and Mouth Disease (EUFMD) aiming to review progress in technical issues affecting the International Control of FMD and in so doing, to highlight significant changes or issues that require to be recognized by those implementing control policies and funding R&D. This meeting is jointly organized by FAO, EUFMD.

2- Summary of the meeting:

The conference discussions during its 3 days sessions dealt with many technical issues related to FMD control on the global level, trends and perspective to be implemented accordingly.

A specific attention was given to the emergence of new virus strains in the M. E area (Iran, Turkey and Egypt) and the risk of transmission to other regions especially the European continent.

Also, the various sessions focused on important issues such as FMD control experience in the region, global model for prediction of FMD risk combining the epidemiological and economic factors in preparing contingency control plans. Researches on new serotypes mostly circulating in M.E and Africa have been also exposed.

The conference also treated the vaccination and diagnostic available tools and the progress made in this field.

FMD specialists discussed the new virus genealogical changes negatively influencing the level of immunity produced by the use of traditional FMD vaccines especially vis a vis the spread of new strains. The quality control of FMD vaccine production and the level of induced immunity against these new strains were largely discussed by the session participants.

Holding this conference in an appropriate time and the presentation of the latest scientific researches prove that induced immunity against FMD in countries disease free is precarious and need to be reconsidered. Accordingly, all necessary precautions must be taken in order to fight against new FMD serotypes and the risk of transmission from Africa and the Middle East to Europe. The European countries are requested to provide all kind of assistance to the infected countries which are practically in need of intensive researches, financial, human and technical resources to reduce the spread of the disease and strengthen their surveillance strategies.

3- Conclusion and follow-up:

Researches, studies and recommendations of this meeting, were very beneficial to countries in the Middle East Region, it was a prelude to the 3rd FMD roundtable which will be held in Damascus-Syria 6-7 November 2006, organized jointly with OIE/FAO-EUFMD and in which all Middle East countries are invited to respond practically on the threat of emergence of new strains in the region and elaborate a new strategy aiming at controlling the disease and avoid its transmission from time to time to the European and neighbouring countries. N.B.: The agenda, documentation and recommendations of this meeting will be included in the final report which will be published on the FAO website (www.fao.org).