

# FAO ANIMAL-HUMAN INTERFACE NETWORK OF VETERINARY PUBLIC HEALTH AND FOOD/FEED SAFETY UPDATES

*"HEALTHY PEOPLE THROUGH HEALTHY ANIMALS AND SAFE PRODUCTS"*

**3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009**

## **DISEASE OUTBREAK**

### **CRYPTOSPORIDIOSIS - AUSTRALIA (NEW SOUTH WALES)**

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A ProMED-mail post

<<http://www.promedmail.org>>

ProMED-mail is a program of the  
International Society for Infectious Diseases

<<http://www.isid.org>>

Date: Sat 28 Feb 2009

Source: The Daily Telegraph [edited]

<<http://www.news.com.au/dailytelegraph/story/0,22049,25117991-5005941,00.html>>

An outbreak of cryptosporidiosis could soar into the thousands, with almost 250 cases already confirmed. Fearing an outbreak of the nasty gastro bug, which 10 years ago left more than 1000 people ill after swimming, health officials yesterday [27 Feb 2009] warned the public to be cautious.

At least 19 pools have been ordered to super-chlorinate their water after infected people identified they became sick after swimming, The Daily Telegraph reports. The germ spreads with such ferocity, especially in summer and in pools, that 44 cases alone have been identified in the past day.

NSW Health's director of communicable diseases Dr Jeremy McNulty said anyone who had diarrhoea in the past fortnight needed to stay out of pools.

"While there is no common link among most cases, some have reported swimming in common pools," he said. "Pools can be easily contaminated by infectious swimmers, and so it is vital that people take care."

NSW Health said there was no evidence these pools were the cause of any infection. Most of the affected pools are from western Sydney. NSW Health is refusing to name them individually, fearing it will lay blame and cause further panic. All pools associated with the bug have been tested, but no evidence of contamination has been found.

Cryptosporidiosis is a diarrhoeal disease caused by a parasitic infection of the intestine. It surges in summer, usually because people are outdoors drinking contaminated water and playing with animals. Children are most susceptible with half of the confirmed cases under 5.

Dr McNulty said the number of cases had doubled since January 2009, sparking concern it could soon mirror the horror outbreak of 1998.

"We don't know if any pool is the source of the outbreak, but we know from previous outbreaks that swimming is a link," he said.

"Cryptosporidiosis is a bug that lives in animals, and people can

carry it. Once it gets into swimming pools, then it can really amplify." The last major outbreak was the summer of 1998. The same year, panic gripped Sydney when bugs, giardia and cryptosporidiosis were found in the Prospect water filtration plant. It became known as Sydney's water crisis, and households were ordered to boil water.

Despite the fear that thousands of people would fall ill, not one person was found to become sick.

There is no treatment for the infection. Symptoms include diarrhoea, stomach cramps, fever, nausea and vomiting, which can last weeks and sometimes even months. Some persons do not present any symptoms. If symptoms are present, they often last about 2 weeks, and then you may feel better.

[Byline: Kate Sikora]

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Communicated by:  
 ProMED-mail <[promed@promedmail.org](mailto:promed@promedmail.org)>

[ProMED's last report of cryptosporidiosis from New South Wales (Cryptosporidiosis - Australia (SA) (02): comments 20070324.1029) points out that person-to-person transmission is more common than expected.

Cryptosporidiosis is endemic in New South Wales, and surveillance is well developed (Viney KA and McAnulty JM. The evaluation of web-based data collection for enhanced surveillance of cryptosporidiosis. NSW Public Health Bull. 2008;19:15-9  
 <[http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18361863?ordinalpos=3&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed\\_ResultsPanel.Pubmed\\_DefaultReportPanel.Pubmed\\_RVDocSum](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18361863?ordinalpos=3&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed_ResultsPanel.Pubmed_DefaultReportPanel.Pubmed_RVDocSum)>).

Studies have implicated transmission from zoonotic reservoirs (Ng J et al. Evidence supporting zoonotic transmission of Cryptosporidium in rural New South Wales. Exp Parasitol. 2008;119:192-5  
 <[http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18343369?ordinalpos=4&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed\\_ResultsPanel.Pubmed\\_DefaultReportPanel.Pubmed\\_RVDocSum](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18343369?ordinalpos=4&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed_ResultsPanel.Pubmed_DefaultReportPanel.Pubmed_RVDocSum)>),  
 and transmission in swimming pools is also well known (Paterson J and Goldthorpe I. Managing a cluster of cryptosporidiosis associated with a public swimming pool. NSW Public Health Bull. 2006;17:80  
 <[http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17036085?ordinalpos=6&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed\\_ResultsPanel.Pubmed\\_DefaultReportPanel.Pubmed\\_RVDocSum](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17036085?ordinalpos=6&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed_ResultsPanel.Pubmed_DefaultReportPanel.Pubmed_RVDocSum)>).  
 - Mod.EP]

## **HANTAVIRUS UPDATE 2009 - AMERICAS: BRAZIL (RIO GRANDE DO SUL)**

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A ProMED-mail post  
 <<http://www.promedmail.org>>  
 ProMED-mail is a program of the  
 International Society for Infectious Diseases  
 <<http://www.isid.org>>

Date: Mon 16 Feb 2009  
 Source: Band [edited]  
 <<http://band.com.br/conteudo.asp?ID=127303>>

The State Health Secretariat of Rio Grande do Sul confirmed the 1st death of the year [2009] due to a hantavirus [infection]. A man from

the city of Tatterdemalion contracted the disease and died this Monday [16 Feb 2009]. A hantavirus [infection can cause] a disease, caused [transmitted] by [virus in] air contaminated with urine and feces of [virus infected] wild rodents, or even through its bite. The symptoms are fever, headache and bodily pain, dry cough and shortness of breath.

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Communicated by:  
 ProMED-PORT  
[promed@promedmail.org](mailto:promed@promedmail.org)

[Unfortunately, these reports in the popular press do not recognized that there is a complex of different hantaviruses than can cause human disease, leaving the reader with the impression that there is just one involved in these cases. The suspected hantaviruses involved in this and previously reported Brazilian cases last year (2008) are not given in this or the previous reports. The ProMED-mail report of cases in Brazil dated 23 Feb 2008 (ProMED-mail archive no. 20080223.07412) indicated that hantaviruses circulating in other areas of Brazil (Mato Grosso) included: Laguna Negra, which has the *Calomys callosus* rodent host, and Castelo dos Sonhos which had previously been found in Para state, but without a known host there. Field research found that, in Mato Grosso, the rodent *Oligoryzomys moojeni* was the host of the Castelo dos Sonhos virus. A brief description of other hantaviruses that occur in Brazil and their rodent hosts is given in ProMED-mail archive no. 20080702.2020.

ProMED-mail would appreciate receiving further information about the confirmation of the etiological agent involved in this case.

A map of Brazil can be accessed at  
<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/brazil.jpg>.

The HealthMap/ProMED-mail interactive map of Brazil can be accessed at  
<http://healthmap.org/promed?v=-10.8,-53.1,4>. - Mod.TY]

## **AVIAN INFLUENZA (20): UK (ENGLAND), TURKEYS, LPAI, H6N1**

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A ProMED-mail post  
<http://www.promedmail.org>  
 ProMED-mail is a program of the  
 International Society for Infectious Diseases  
<http://www.isid.org>

[1]

Date: **Fri 27 Feb 2009**  
 Source: DEFRA Information Bulletin Ref: 42/09 [edited]  
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2009/090227.htm>

Further laboratory tests following a routine veterinary investigation at 2 poultry premises in East Anglia have now confirmed that the avian influenza virus present is H6N1.

The H6 virus type has been isolated in domestic poultry and wild birds in Europe over the last few years.

Animal Health began the investigation late on Tuesday evening [24 Feb 2009] and is waiting for further laboratory tests to determine whether the virus is high or low pathogenicity, and these results are not expected for some days.

To date, there is no evidence that avian influenza of the H6 type has been found to be highly pathogenic, but this possibility cannot be ruled out until the further laboratory tests are complete.

Restrictions remain in place on the premises while the investigation continues. No further precautionary restrictions are considered necessary in the area at present.

Routine veterinary investigations into notifiable diseases occur on a regular basis. It is a legal requirement to notify the Animal Health agency of the possibility of such diseases whenever these cannot be ruled out by a vet or an animal keeper as part of the diagnosis of illness in animals or birds.

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Communicated by:  
ProMED-mail <[promed@promedmail.org](mailto:promed@promedmail.org)>

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[2]

Date: **Sat 28 Feb 2009**

Source: Eveningnews24 [edited]

<<http://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/content/news/story.aspx?brand=ENOnline&category=News&tBrand=ENOnline&tCategory=news&itemid=NOED28%20Feb%202009%2007%3A34%3A11%3A760>>

Tests on turkeys at 2 farms have confirmed the birds have a low-risk strain of bird flu called H6N1.

The flu, affecting birds at Bernard Matthews' breeder farms at Yaxham, near Dereham, and Ubbeston, near Halesworth was quickly ruled out as the deadly H5 or H7 strain of avian influenza. But it is thought to be the 1st time birds in Britain have been affected by this particular strain.

Last night [27 Feb 2009], the company said tests had confirmed the birds had the H6N1 virus, one of low risk to humans. A Bernard Matthews statement said: "This is a virus type that has been isolated in both wild birds and commercial poultry flocks in Europe over the last few years."

Defra started tests for bird flu on Arran Farm at Yaxham and at Ubbeston on Tuesday [24 Feb 2009] after the firm brought it to their attention. Workers had noticed an unusual drop in egg production levels. The Health Protection Agency said staff did not have to be treated.

The 2 farms remain under movement restrictions. None of Bernard Matthews Farms' other operations have been affected.

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Communicated by:  
ProMED-mail Rapporteur Mary Marshall

## **EBOLA-RESTON, PORCINE - PHILIPPINES (07): (BULACAN), CULLING**

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A ProMED-mail post

<<http://www.promedmail.org>>

ProMED-mail is a program of the  
International Society for Infectious Diseases  
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Date: **Sun 1 Mar 2009**

Source: Agence France-Presse via ABS-CBN News [edited]

<<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/nation/03/01/09/officials-begin-mass-pig-slaughter-vs-ebola-reston>>

Philippine health and agriculture officials arrived at a farm in Pandi near Manila Sunday [1 Mar 2009] to begin slaughtering around 6000 pigs to prevent the spread of the Ebola-Reston virus.

Security was tight, with police checkpoints set up in Bulacan province to prevent reporters from getting close to the farm where traces of the non-lethal virus had been detected. Even houses near the farm were being secured by police to keep outsiders away.

Eric Tayag, head of the National Epidemiology Center, told reporters that an electric stun-gun would be used to kill the pigs, after which the carcasses would be burned and then buried. He said they expected to cull only about 500 pigs Sunday [1 Mar 2009] but hoped later to slaughter 1000 a day and to complete the process within a week.

Aircraft were prevented from flying over the farm, Tayag said as he turned down a request from a local television station to shoot the scene from the air.

According to the World Health Organisation, the strain infecting the pigs is not dangerous to humans, unlike the 4 deadly Ebola subtypes found in Africa.

The government earlier imposed a quarantine on 2 farms in Bulacan and Pangasinan provinces after sample testing found some pigs were carrying the Ebola-Reston strain. It was later found that the spread of the virus was only continuing in the farm in Pandi town, Bulacan province.

The strain was 1st found in laboratory monkeys exported from the Philippines to the US in 1989.

So far, 6 farm workers and butchers have been found with the antibodies to Ebola Reston, and scientists are still trying to determine whether the 6 caught the virus from pigs.

If such a link is proven, it would be the 1st time humans have contracted the disease from pigs.

**Compiled by FAO Eureast VPH Network moderator,**

**With my best regards**

**Dr. Eftychia Xylouri – Fragkiadaki**