



Update on Bluetongue (March 2019)

BTV 02/2019

Bluetongue 8 confirmed in Belgium

- Belgium reported an outbreak of Bluetongue serotype 8 on 27/03/2019.
- This is the first outbreak of Bluetongue in Belgium since December 2008.
- The outbreak was confirmed on the 19/02/2019.
- The outbreak occurred in the south of the country in the Luxembourg region (see map 1)
- A total of 8 bovine animals were affected in a susceptible population of 785.
- BTV control measures and restrictions will now apply to the whole of Belgium.



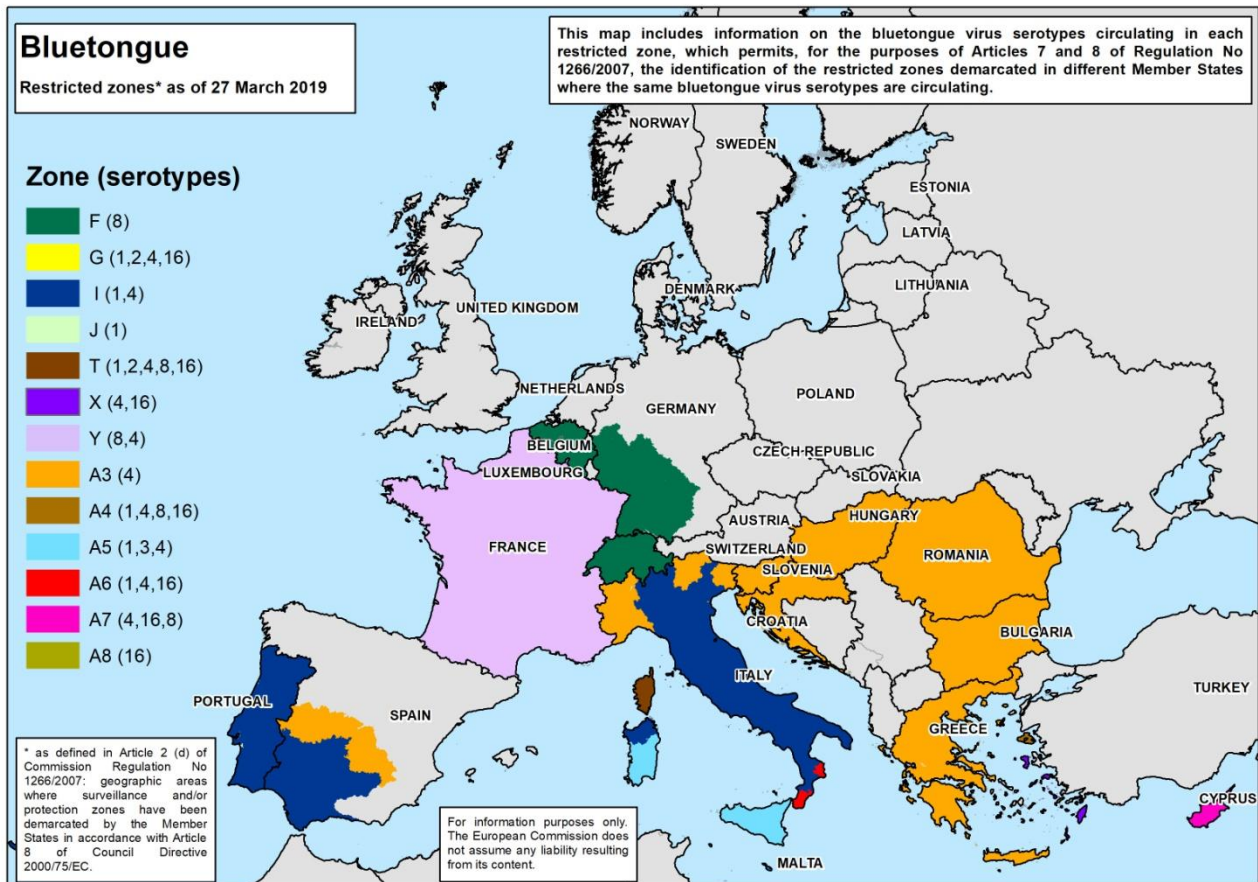
Map 1 showing location of BTV 8 outbreak in Belgium

(Courtesy of ADNS system)

Bluetongue in the rest of Europe

- As per our last update in January 2018, the BTV 8 situation in Germany is ongoing and the German authorities have reported a total of 50 outbreaks there since the 1 January 2019
- Italy, Greece and Spain have also reported outbreaks of Bluetongue since 1 January 2019
- France has reported no outbreaks yet this year but a total of 666 outbreaks were reported during 2018 and the whole of France remains restricted for BTV 8 & 4.

- Map 2 below shows distribution of BT restricted regions in Europe.



Map 2: Bluetongue restricted zones in Europe as of the 27 March 2019. For updated maps:

https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/ad_control-measures_bt_restrictedzones-map.jpg

Measures to prevent bluetongue coming to Ireland via imported animals:

- DAFM implements a risk based post import testing protocol whereby all ruminant animals originating from or transiting through BTV affected counties are sampled for BTV on their arrival in Ireland.
- From now on all ruminant animals originating from Belgium will be tested for Bluetongue as part of this post import testing protocol.

What herd owners can do:

- Do not import ruminant animals from bluetongue restricted areas unless absolutely necessary.
- Contact your Regional Veterinary Office for advice if you are considering importing animals

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/contact/>

- Seek additional assurances to ensure that animals are not infected with BTV prior to departure, such as a recent negative PCR test for bluetongue carried out in an accredited laboratory.
- On arrival, keep any imported animals isolated and indoors until they have been tested for BTV by staff from this Department and have returned a negative test result.
- Please read and follow these biosecurity guidelines before making any decision to import:

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/animalhealthwelfare/diseasecontrols/bluetongue/disease/BiosecurityAdviceFarmersImpLivestockVer1260318.pdf>

Key points in relation to Bluetongue

- The high-risk period for Bluetongue in Ireland is during the vector (midge) season which is between April and early December each year.
- Infected animals may not show any clinical signs and may only be detected through testing their blood for BTV.
- Even animals with bluetongue vaccination records may harbour BTV.
- If bluetongue is introduced to Ireland, it would have a major impact on our export markets. Also, the control measures required by the EU legislation would have a significant impact on local herd management.

Further information on Bluetongue:

DAFM website

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/bluetongue/>

Bluetongue information leaflet for photographs of clinical signs:

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/animalhealthwelfare/diseasecontrols/bluetongue/disease/BluetongueFactsheet2017210617.pdf>

European Commission:

https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/control-measures/bluetongue_en

EU Regulation 1266 of 2007 on the control of Bluetongue:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1526483808190&uri=CELEX:02007R1266-20120605>

Contact details for RVOs available at:

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/contact/>

NDCC

29/03/2019