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Date: 1/29/2015

GAIN Report Number: RO1502

Romania

Post: Bucharest

Romania confirms the second case of BSE

Report Categories:

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

Livestock and Products

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Report Highlights:

In December 2014 Romania confirmed the second case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), atypical form, as part of the BSE surveillance program. According to National Veterinary and Food Safety Authority (ANSVSA), the sick animal came from a backyard farm located in the center of Romania. The first case was detected in May 2014 and it triggered the suspension of the status “country with negligible BSE risk” granted by the World Organization of Animal Health (OIE).

General Information:

On December 22nd 2014, a sample collected from a bovine slaughtered on December 16th, 2014 in an authorized slaughterhouse in Dambovită County (south of Romania) raised the suspicion of BSE disease (also known as mad cow disease). The origin of the animal, a backyard farm from Covasna County (center of Romania), was identified, along with animal ascendants and descendants. Currently the process of identifying all animals pertaining to the same herd and all animals which came in contact with the infected animal is on-going.

The National Veterinary and Food Safety Authority (ANSVSA) assured consumers that public health has not been put in danger, as meat coming from the positive animal has not entered the food chain. Meat and by-products from the positive animal and the animal slaughtered before the infected one have been seized.

On December 23rd 2014, when the Institute for Diagnosis and Animal Health confirmed the suspicion of the disease, the entire amount of seized meat and products was destroyed into a rendering facility.

On January 7th 2015, the sample was sent for strain determination to the EU Reference Laboratory in Weybridge, United Kingdom, which later confirmed the atypical form of BSE. Under such circumstances, the veterinary service started the procedure of evaluating the health status of all animals which came in contact with the positive one. The backyard farm has been officially placed under surveillance for animal and products movement. All animal owners will be compensated for losses in case their animals are sent for disposal.

Institute for Diagnosis and Animal Health confirmed the first case of atypical BSE form in May 2014. Following this occurrence, World Organization of Animal Health (OIE) suspended in June 2014 the status of “country with negligible BSE risk”.

Unlike the classical cases of mad cow which are caused when cattle are fed with feeding materials which contain proteins of animal origin, the atypical cases occur spontaneously, the causes being currently under investigation. In the context of a second case of BSE atypical form confirmation in Romania, ANSVSA suggested during the most recent meeting of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (SCOFCAH) at EU level that the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) would consider undertaking studies regarding the causes of BSE atypical forms.