

Monitoring

Animal Health

Cattle

Highlights Report, First Quarter 2015

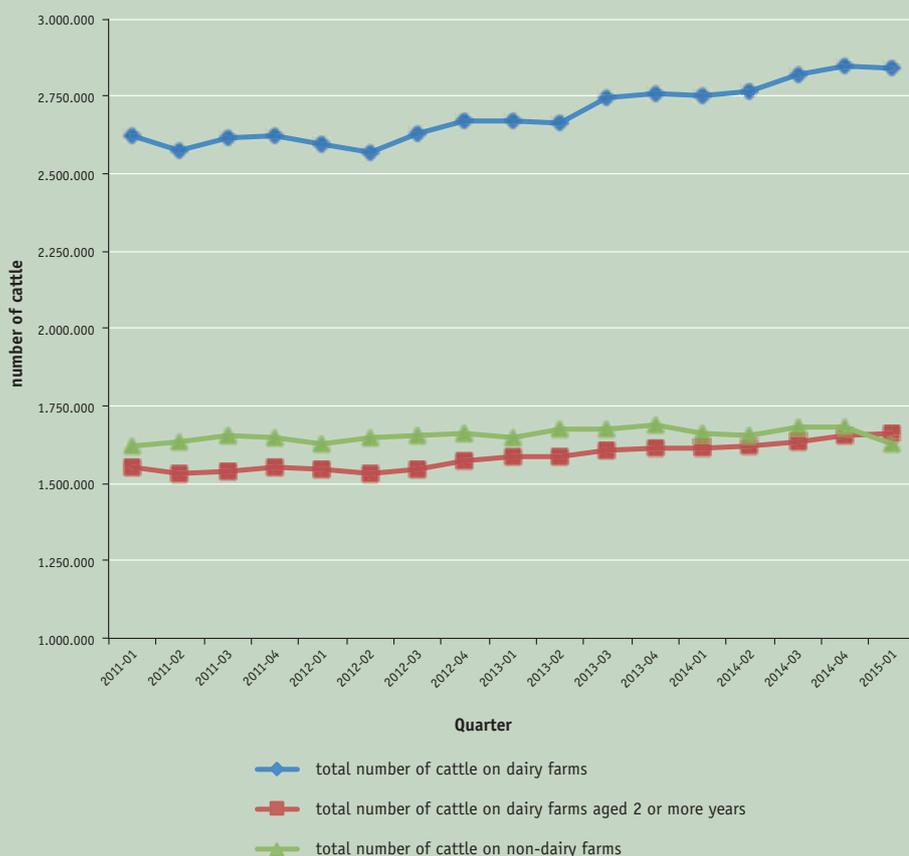
Cattle demographics

Dairy farms: In the first quarter of 2015, there were 17,679 dairy farms with animals in the Netherlands (19 more versus the previous quarter). The total number of cattle on dairy farms and the number of cattle older than two years on dairy farms has been increasing since the second quarter of 2012 (see figure 1). In the first quarter, an average dairy farm in the Netherlands had 94.0 animals older than two years (2014-4: 93.7). 11.1% of dairy herds formed an epidemiological unit with a breeder of young stock (2014-4: 10.8%).

Non-dairy farms: In the first quarter of 2015, there were 18,257 non-dairy farms with animals in the Netherlands. The total number of cattle on non-dairy farms has declined (see figure 1). However, in the first quarter of 2015, the average farm had 89.3 cattle (2014-4: 86.7).

Figure 1 Number of cattle in the Netherlands

(source: GD-BRBS and I&R)



Short news

- Number of contacts GD Veekijker in first quarter 2015: 897 telephone calls; 134 farm visits and 634 necropsies.
- Salmonella: less infections detected by GD Animal Health (379 farms; 2014-1: 478 farms). In the national programme, 96% of the dairy farms had no antibodies in bulk milk in the first round. This was 93% in the first round of 2014.
- Listeriosis: four infections detected upon pathological examination (one aborted foetus, three cattle with nervous symptoms).
- BVD: 35% of dairy farms have a BVD-virus free or BVD-antibody bulk milk unsuspected status. This was 34% in the fourth quarter of 2014.
- IBR: 45% of dairy farms have IBR-free or IBR-antibody bulk milk unsuspected status. This was 43% in the fourth quarter of 2014.

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Information that is used for the surveillance is collected from different sources. The initiative comes in part from veterinarians and farmers, and partly from GD Animal Health. The information is fully interpreted to achieve the objectives of the surveillance programme, the rapid identification of health problems on the one hand and the monitoring of more general trends and developments on the other. The livestock farming sector, in the form of the Dutch inter-branch organisations DairyNL and Calf Industry Association and the Ministry for Economic Affairs is co-financier of the surveillance programme.



Surveillance highlights

Results of pilot study into full-term calves with low birth weight at dairy farms

The GD monitoring flyer for the second quarter of 2014 describes a very slight increase in the number of calves with low birth weight after a normal pregnancy at dairy farms. A pilot study into possible (risk) factors was undertaken from 1 July 2014 to 31 January 2015. Despite GD Animal Health communication regarding the pilot study, the number of reports were low and the slight increase of reports to GD Animal Health did not continue. Over the course of the pilot, GD Veekijker received reports from only eleven farms, eight of which were visited and questionnaires completed. These eight dairy farmers reported a total of 28 calves with low birth weight. A variation was seen in the (estimated) birth weight of the calves reported (15-35 kg) and a number of calves were also found to have other abnormalities (incl. lens cataract, general weak-

ness and stillborn), giving a mixed total picture. It was not possible to detect risk factors, due to the low number of reports. No common factors were detected which might clarify the symptom.

Thickening of base of the heart in dairy cattle: results of pilot study

In the report on the second quarter of 2013, it was reported that GD Animal Health had been informed by NVWA (Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority) that an increased number of a thickened base of the heart was detected in dairy cattle in the slaughterhouse. This signal had not been detected by GD Animal Health during pathological examinations. A pilot study was initiated in cooperation with the NVWA. A number of slaughterhouses in the Eastern Netherlands were informed of the pilot by the NVWA; when thickening of the base of the heart was detected, the hearts were to be

News flashes *continued*

- Liver fluke infections: less liver fluke infections were detected in 2014. 389 versus 778 in 2013.

sent to the GD Animal Health Pathology department. GD Animal Health conducted a brief literature study, and examined the cells and tissues of the hearts received. However, few cases were detected (two), the reported increase in thickened heart muscles therefore did not continue in the subsequent period, resulting in the decision to halt the pilot study in 2015. The two tumours examined were not the result of an infection and did not pose any risk for the public health or the animal health situation in the Netherlands.

Animal Health Situation in the Netherlands

DISEASE	DUTCH SITUATION	SURVEILLANCE – HIGHLIGHTS FIRST QUARTER 2015
Article 15 diseases (compulsory notification and eradication)		
Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)	Officially free since 2001, last regional outbreaks in 1986 and 2001.	No abnormalities.
Bovine tuberculosis	Officially free since 1999.	No abnormalities.
Anthrax	Not detected since 1994.	No abnormalities.
Rabies	Officially free since 2012.	No abnormalities.
Aujeszky's disease	Officially free since 2004.	No abnormalities.
Brucellosis	Officially free since 1999.	No infections detected upon monitoring of blood samples from aborting cows.
Leucosis (EBL)	Officially free since 1999.	No infections detected upon monitoring using bulk-milk testing and slaughterhouse blood samples.
BSE	No more cases detected upon monitoring since 2010 (total 88 cases from 1997 - 2009).	No abnormalities.
Bluetongue	Officially free since 2012 (all serotypes).	No circulation detected in 2014. Alertness due to BTV-4 outbreaks in South-East Europe.

Table continuation

DISEASE	DUTCH SITUATION	SURVEILLANCE – HIGHLIGHTS FIRST QUARTER 2015
Article 100 diseases (compulsory notification)		
Leptospirosis	98% of the dairy farms have L. hardjo-free status. Just 1% of the non-dairy farms had animals with antibodies*.	No infections detected upon bulk milk monitoring.
Listeriosis	Main source is poorly preserved grass silage.	Detected four times.
Q-fever	68% of dairy farms tested bulk milk positive for antibodies* 11% of the non-dairy farms had animals with antibodies.**	One infection detected in aborted foetus.
Salmonellosis	All dairy farms are aware of their status via bulk milk antibody tests (Q-lip) – antibodies detected at 4% of farms. 9.5% of the non-dairy farms had animals with antibodies*.	Infection detected at 379 farms (low versus count in 1 st quarter of previous years).
Yersiniosis	Detected incidentally in cattle, specifically in aborted foetuses.	No infections detected.
Sexually transmitted diseases	Over last five years, no infection detected for <i>Campylobacter fetus</i> ssp. venerealis and <i>Trichomonas foetus</i> upon monitoring.	No infections detected.
Other OIE list diseases		
IBR	45% of dairy farms IBR-free or bulk milk antibody unsuspected of containing IBR (increase). 21% of dairy farms tested bulk milk antibody positive for IBR**. 18% of the non-dairy farms had animals with IBR antibodies.**	New infections detected in 0.1% of the IBR-free farms; new infections detected in 1.8% of the IBR bulk milk antibody unsuspected farms. IBR field virus was detected in 14% of the 42 farms who had submitted nasal swabs (of which one outbreak at an IBR-free farm).
Paratuberculosis	99% of dairy farms have a PPN (Paratuberculosis Programme Netherlands) status, 75% of which have status A ("unsuspected"). Status of non-dairy farms unknown	6% of "status A" farms had purchased animals from farms with a lower status.
MCF	Infections with Ovine herpes virus type 2 occur incidentally.	No infections detected at necropsy.
Tick diseases	Ticks infected with <i>Babesia divergens</i> , <i>Anaplasma phagocytophilia</i> and <i>Mycoplasma wenyonii</i> are present in the Netherlands.	No infections with tick diseases were detected.
BVD	35% of dairy farms have BVD-virus free status or bulk milk antibody unsuspected status (increase). 14% of dairy farms have had recent BVD-virus circulation*. 19% of non-dairy farms have had recent BVD-virus circulation*.	18% of the BVD-bulk milk antibody unsuspected status farms runs the risk of introduction of infection by purchasing lower status animals.
Neosporosis	Important cause of abortions in NL.	Infection detected in 13% of submitted aborted foetuses.
Liver fluke	Infection present, severity dependent on water levels and rainfall.	Liver fluke prognosis: Infection detected in samples from 134 cattle farms (infections from 2014).

* Final Report Specific Surveillance 2013–2014; prevalence study

** Final Report Specific Surveillance 2011–2012; prevalence study

