Animal Health Data Comparison

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Introduction Phase 1

The impact of **epidemic livestock diseases** can be **devastating** on **farmers** and the **economy** as a whole – in a specific country, a continent or even globally. The new **Animal Health Strategy 2007-2013** for the European Union (EU) is striving for **increased collaboration between EU member** states to increase the prevention of animal health related problems before they happen and to be ready **to manage outbreaks and crisis more effectively**. The strategy builds on the current animal health legal framework in the EU. It recognises the need for replacing the existing series of linked policy actions by a single regulatory framework. This framework should have an incentive-orientated approach and an appropriate sharing of costs and responsibilities.

For plans to gradually develop an EU interoperational scheme, feasibility studies are necessary before concrete proposals can be made.

Animal movement and health data are key sources of information in the effective prevention and management of disease prevention and outbreaks. The feasibility of making the collection of animal health data interoperational within the EU is therefore of great interest.

The current project was a pilot study to provide an overview on animal health data recording on non-notifiable diseases in France, United Kingdom, Netherlands and Denmark. The focus of this project was on animal health data in cattle, pigs and poultry. This could help to assess the feasibility for interoperability and increased collaboration in the collection of animal health data in the EU. This would be a major step in achieving the overall goal of the new EU animal health strategy. **The methodology of this study in itself is a potential catalyst to increased sharing of relevant knowledge and collaboration between countries.**

For more information and the report please go to www.eadgene.info (Industry > Data comparison project)

Results Phase 1

1. The collection of animal health data within the four EU countries is strongly shaped by the national historical scale and by the organisation of animal production for each species, as well as by the national and EU regulations, which to a large extent are being policed by official bodies.
2. Most of the currently existing data bases for animal health data have not been designed with the potential for exchange of data and accessibility for a variety of stakeholders in mind. However there are trends for more sophisticated integrated data bases with electronical data input, which are stronger in some countries than in others.
3. In general animal health data collection policed through official bodies is more harmonised than what is being collected on a commercial level.

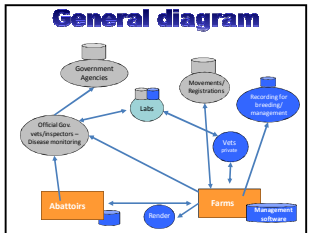

Figure 1; General diagram of the animal health data recording systems.

4. The availability of data collected to meet requirements of official bodies is limited. There is a lot of information potentially available from what is being collected through bodies such as animal breeding, milk recording companies and animal health services. As a result of commercial competition, the latter pool of data is more difficult to access. Differences in accessibility exist between countries.
5. Animal health schemes and levy boards provide incentives for greater interoperability and transparency of what is being collected on a commercial level on farms and in abattoirs.
6. The various stakeholders throughout the food chains in Europe are increasingly aware of the need for interoperational and accessible animal health data.

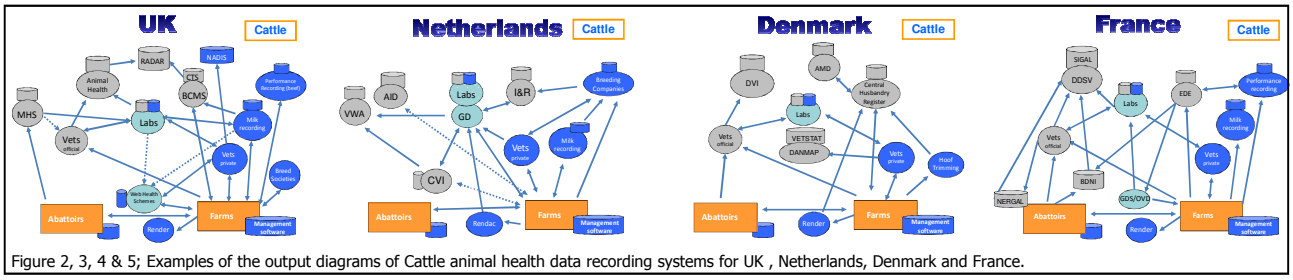

Figure 2, 3, 4 & 5; Examples of the output diagrams of Cattle animal health data recording systems for UK , Netherlands, Denmark and France.

Conclusions phase 1

This pilot study gives an initial indication for potential opportunities and the feasibility of greater interoperability and transparency in animal health data collection across EU countries.
However, **the main outcome is that more work is necessary to develop a feasible methodology to increase the interoperability of data across countries**.

Stakeholder groups, which have been found to be particularly proactive in collaboration within countries, such as commercial vets, organised in this respect or organisations dealing with health monitoring, should be targeted to encourage cross-national collaboration/ networks in animal health data collection and assist the project team in championing cross country and cross sector learning and knowledge transfer.

Aims and Objectives of Phase 2

1. To identify opportunities for improved sharing and further development of systems for collecting data on animal health traits.
2. To encourage better interactions between the different stakeholders to develop stronger and more effective networks in relation with animal health recording.
3. To propose a plan for further development of animal health data comparability in Europe (Phase 3).

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