



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations (FAO)

PRESS RELEASE

Online training helps veterinarians in lumpy skin disease preparedness

**9 July 2020,
Budapest, Hungary**

To ensure preparedness, early detection, and response against the incursion of any transboundary animal disease, it is paramount to train the first responders – the veterinarians, and as many as possible. With this in mind, FAO offers an electronic training kit in the form of a four-week online course on lumpy skin disease (LSD) preparedness.

Lumpy skin disease is a vector-borne disease in cattle that has been spreading gradually over the past years from Africa, through the Middle East and Turkey, and into the Balkans and Russia. More recently, the disease has made a big jump into Asia, to countries with the highest cattle numbers worldwide, such as Bangladesh, China, and India, and threatening Central Asia and other Asian coun-

tries. Never in history has lumpy skin disease such a wide geographic distribution.

The disease comes with high economic costs, considerable trade disruptions, and serious impacts on local livelihoods. Moreover, the disease is completely new to some countries, meaning that farmers and veterinary services have never seen or fought it before.

FAO has already developed in the past standardized training materials (presentations, guidelines, etc.), which can be easily translated and adapted to countries specifics, and rolled out quickly to reach most national veterinarians through the training-of-trainer (or cascade) approach. This was already implemented in North Macedonia (2017) and Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine (2018).

“Recently, we’ve realized that, even with continuous trainings, we cannot cover everyone; so to meet the

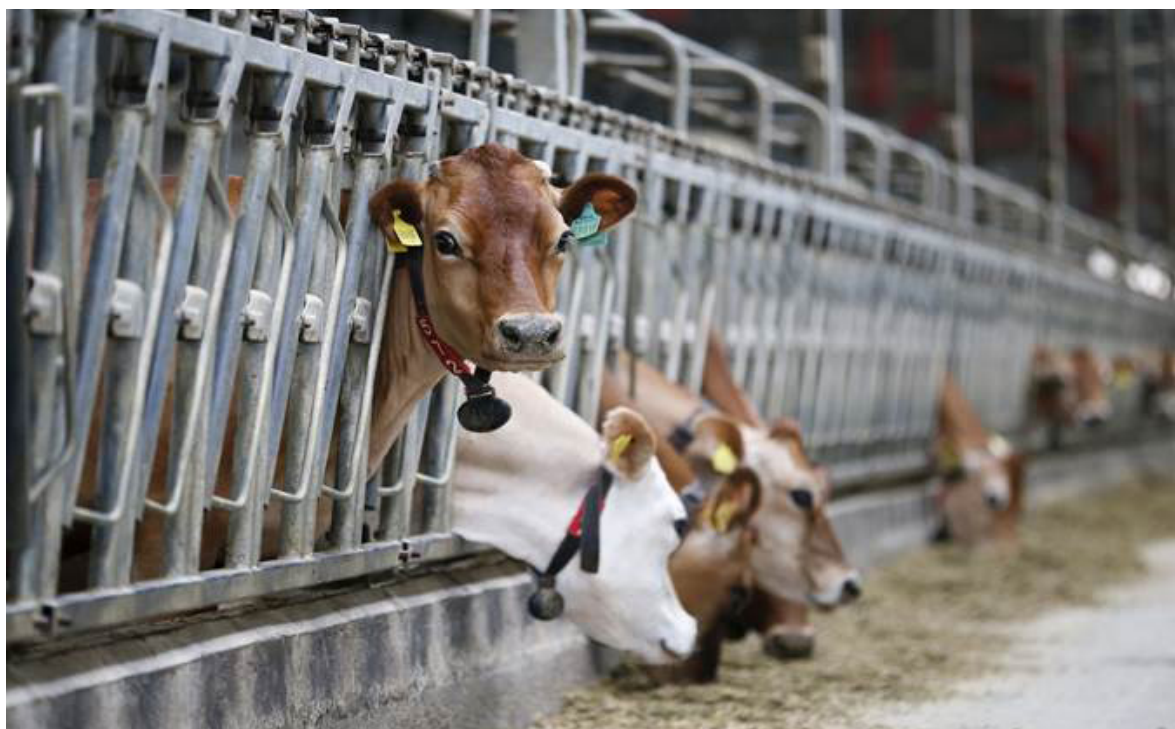


Photo: ©FAO Maxim Zmeyev

rising demand of both infected and at-risk countries for lumpy skin disease training, we have switched to online,” said Daniel Beltran-Alcrudo, FAO animal health officer. He pointed out the “obvious advantages” of online trainings – a format that is easy, requiring only a stable internet connection, and cost-effective to scale up, reaching people in remote locations who can then learn at their own pace. Online training has now proven more relevant than ever in these times of COVID-19-related restrictions to travelling and face-to-face meetings.

The current pilot course has been co-organized by FAO and the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD), under the umbrella of the Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs). The course materials have been developed jointly by a team of experts from FAO and the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institute in Germany.

The main goal of the pilot is to elicit experts’ feedback to further improve the course. Participants include invited representatives of veterinary services from 44 countries, all the way from Western Europe to East Asia. There are also international agencies, and vaccine manufacturers, as well as lumpy skin disease experts, enrolled in the course for a total of 282 participants.

A Russian version of the course is planned for the second half of the year.

ABOUT THE COURSE

The 10-hour tutored course has six training modules that cover a range of topics, such as the overview of the disease, clinical and pathological diagnosis, sampling and laboratory diagnosis, epidemiology and outbreak investigation, surveillance, and control and eradication. The course starts with an introductory webinar on the training and the trainers through short technical presentation. Trainers are experts in either diagnostics, epidemiology, or the control of disease. Each participant can access the training material, discussion forum, recordings of the webinars, and a list of further resources.

Each week during the four-week period, a specific topic will be in focus for the participants and trainers to interact on in the discussion forum. Interactions are further facilitated by the trainers’ questions.

The course ends with a final course assessment and a closing webinar covering topics that proved to be difficult

or have sparked the most discussion in the forum. Finally, through the feedback section, participants can rate the course content and provide suggestions for further improvement.

LINKS

Vets from the Balkans and Eastern Europe discuss disease risk communication and outbreak management:

http://www.fao.org/europe/news/detail-news/en/c/1271970/?utm_source=press%20release&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=fao

Predicting the areas at risk for lumpy skin disease (LSD) spread within Eurasia:

http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/en/empres/news_080219.html?utm_source=press%20release&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=fao

Train of trainers program for field veterinarians on LSD in Moldova (TCP/RER/3605):

http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/en/empres/news_080219.html?utm_source=press%20release&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=fao

Cascade training to prepare field veterinarians in Eastern Europe against lumpy skin disease (LSD):

http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/en/empres/news_260618b.html?utm_source=press%20release&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=fao

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

Lumpy skin disease – A field manual for veterinarians:

<http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/1fcf63b0-80e9-4f8e-825f-10ea6e998479/>

Sustainable prevention, control and elimination of Lumpy Skin Disease – Eastern Europe and the Balkans:

<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7827e.pdf>

Spatial analysis of lumpy skin disease (LSD) in Eurasia – Predicting areas at risk for further spread within the region:

<https://doi.org/10.1111/tbed.13090>

Editable leaflets to allow quick awareness against priority transboundary animal diseases:

http://www.fao.org/index.php?id=94206&utm_source=press%20release&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=fao