

## The OIE Disease Reporting System

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Since 1976, the United States has been a member country of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), formerly known as Office International des Epizooties. As of May 2006, a total of 167 member countries are signatory to the OIE. In 1994, the World Trade Organization recognized the OIE as the international body for setting animal health standards, reporting global animal situations and disease status, and presenting guidelines and recommendations on sanitary measures relating to animal health.

The OIE facilitates intergovernmental cooperation to prevent the spread of contagious diseases in animals by sharing scientific research among its members. The major functions of the OIE are to collect and disseminate information on the distribution and occurrence of animal diseases and to ensure that scientifically justified standards govern international trade in animals and animal products.

Since it was created, the OIE has played a key role in its capacity as the sole international reference organization for animal health, enjoying established international recognition and benefiting from direct collaboration with the veterinary services of all member countries. The OIE aims to continue to achieve this through development and revision of international standards for diagnostic tests, vaccines, and for the safe international trade of animals and animal products.

To ensure transparency in animal disease reporting, each member country is obligated to notify the OIE regarding animal diseases it detects within its territory. The OIE will then disseminate this information to its member countries, which in turn can implement preventive measures, if necessary. OIE member countries, through their official delegates, are required to make available to other countries whatever information is necessary to minimize the spread of important diseases and to assist in achieving better worldwide control of these diseases. Also, through their delegates, member countries can comment on and influence OIE proposed changes to any animal health standards under consideration.

The OIE requires member countries to report the following disease events under OIE Terrestrial Health Code-2006, Article 1.1.2.3.:

- Immediate notification:
  - First occurrence of an OIE listed disease and/or infection
  - Re-occurrence of a listed disease and/or infection
  - First occurrence of a new strain of a pathogen of an OIE listed disease
  - Sudden and unexpected increase in the distribution, incidence, morbidity or mortality of a listed disease
  - An emerging disease with significant morbidity or mortality, or zoonotic potential
  - Evidence of change of epidemiology of a listed disease in particular if there is a zoonotic impact
- Weekly follow-up reports to immediate notification

- Reports every 6 months on the absence or presence and evolution of diseases listed by the OIE and information of epidemiological significance to other countries
- Annual reports concerning any other information of significance to other countries

The Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health (CEAH) National Surveillance Unit (NSU) collaborates with other Veterinary Services units as well as other USDA agencies with these disease reporting obligations.

### **Web-Based Reporting**

In 2005, 6-month reporting was established electronically through the secure online OIE World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS). Immediate notification and annual reporting modules of the WAHIS program went into effect in 2006. The United States uses this newly established Web-based reporting system to report diseases to the OIE.