

An alternative, extensive one year surveillance programme for TSE in small ruminants

A cross-sectional survey for TSE of small ruminants was established from July 2004 to June 2005 in Switzerland. The sampling frame included adult animals sampled in abattoirs and fallen stock animals. 32'134 sheep and 3'263 goats were examined. The regional and seasonal distribution, repartition of gender, breed, age, death reasons and yearly repartition of the collected samples were compared with available data of the small ruminant national flock. A total of 6 sheep and 2 goats were TSE positive. Seven were classified as atypical scrapie and one sheep as classical scrapie; none showed evidence of BSE. The probability of finding a TSE positive case was significantly higher in the fallen stock population, confirming fallen stock as risk population. The results showed no evidence for the presence of BSE in the Swiss small ruminant population. The presence of classical and atypical Scrapie was demonstrated. The characteristics of an extended cross-sectional survey for one year in comparison to a small sampling size over years are discussed.

Hervé Brünisholz

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