

EU NEWS

September 2026

Shamonda-like virus continues to spread across Europe

Thursday, 27 August 2026



The Shamonda-like virus identified [earlier this summer](#) in cattle in France, Germany and Switzerland continues to spread across Europe, with new countries, regions and species now involved.

Geographical spread continues

In France, [18 departments](#) were affected by 24 August, with detections now reaching the western departments of Manche and Calvados. In [Switzerland](#), the virus has been detected in 22 cantons, while [Germany](#) has reported cases in additional Länder, including Hesse and Rhineland-Palatinate. Cases have also been confirmed in [Liechtenstein](#), the [Netherlands](#), [Belgium](#) and [Austria](#).

Now also found in horses

The virus has also been detected in other species. In Switzerland, it was found in [horses](#) with neurological disease as well as in aborted bovine foetuses, supporting the possibility of transplacental infection. In Belgium, detection of the virus in [sheep](#) has been reported and is being investigated further.

Veterinary surveillance remains essential

With *Culicoides* midges considered the vector, continued clinical vigilance and timely sampling are important. The emerging disease is currently not notifiable, and veterinary surveillance remains essential.

(photo ©Daiga Ellaby/Unsplash)

New study highlights fish medicines shortage

Saturday, 15 August 2026



A [new study](#) co-authored by the FVE and aquaculture experts highlights a persistent gap between the authorisation and availability of veterinary medicinal products for finfish in Europe. Published in *Veterinary Sciences*, the study covers the EU and EFTA countries from 2018 to 2026.

Authorisation does not mean availability

While the number of authorised products increased from 304 in 2018 to 332 in 2025, the number of authorised products with unique active substances that were available fell from 84 to 70. Current data indicate that only 26.5% of authorised products are actively marketed, creating what the authors describe as a “paper market” that conceals significant therapeutic gaps.

Limited options for key fish species

The authors note that the shortage is particularly evident in seabass, seabream, carp and trout production. Limited market size, industry consolidation, increased environmental requirements and growing administrative and financial burdens are identified as potential drivers. Despite mechanisms in EU veterinary medicines legislation intended to support limited markets, therapeutic diversity remains stagnant and aquaculture continues to rely heavily on off-label use, they add.

Access needed for sustainable growth

With demand for fish products increasing, the study argues that European aquaculture has an important role to play in strengthening EU self-sufficiency. Improved access to authorised medicinal products, particularly alternatives to antibiotics, is essential 'to prevent and treat disease while safeguarding fish health and welfare' and supporting sustainable sector growth.

Therapeutic challenges in the finfish sector were also identified at a [stakeholder meeting in March](#).

(photo ©Bob Brewer/Unsplash)

FVE and Feeva secure access to three key equine medicines

Thursday, 13 August 2026



Following sustained advocacy by FVE and [Feeva](#), the European Commission has added midazolam, sevoflurane and ketoconazole to the EU list of substances that can be used in horses under the provisions for essential substances and substances providing added clinical benefit. The change, set out in [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2026/1810](#), is an important outcome for equine medicine, helping ensure veterinarians have access to medicines essential for appropriate treatment and anaesthesia.

Additions and removals

The three substances have been added to the list established under [Regulation \(EU\) 2025/901](#). At the same time, digoxin, dorzolamide, griseofulvin, imipramine, phenytoin and ticarcillin have been removed from the previous [Regulation \(EC\) No 1950/2006](#).

Several substances previously covered by the old legislation – including tiletamine, zolazepam, polymyxin B and rifampicin – are not included in the new list. However, transitional arrangements allow their continued use under the previous legislation until 21 May 2027, unless further amendments are adopted.

The profession to continue advocacy

‘This is excellent news for equine practitioners,’ noted Volker Moser, UEVP President. ‘Having access to essential medicines is not a luxury – it is a prerequisite for equine welfare: safe anaesthesia and effective treatment.’ FVE will continue to advocate for a regulatory framework that gives veterinarians access to the medicines they need to deliver high-quality equine care while safeguarding animal and public health.

(photo ©Wolfgang Claussen/Pixabay)

Published: the EU Companion animal welfare and traceability Regulation

Wednesday, 12 August 2026



It's here! [Regulation \(EU\) 2026/1818](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability was published on 10 August in the Official Journal of the EU. The political green light was given after the formal [adoption by the European Parliament](#), on 28 April.

FVE produces leaflet for quick reference

Together with [Fecava](#), FVE has created a leaflet, [What's New in the Regulation?](#) to help inform veterinarians, breeders, establishments and owners about the changes introduced by the regulation. These include:

- **Identification and registration:** All dogs and cats must be identified and registered. Staggering deadlines are proposed.
- **Databases:** Member States will be required to establish interoperable databases to improve traceability and facilitate the exchange of information across the EU.
- **Online selling:** New rules will apply to online selling and advertising to ensure better verification, transparency, and traceability in digital marketplaces.

- **Welfare standards for breeding establishments:** The regulation introduces harmonised welfare requirements for breeding establishments across the EU, including standards related to housing, care, ethical breeding, and health management.
- **Requirements for breeders:** The new rules include requirements on the approval of breeding establishments, education and training, as well as veterinary visits and oversight.

Practical guidance needed in support of frontline vets

‘Years of veterinary advocacy have helped put companion animal welfare on the European agenda, noted Volker Moser, UEVP president. ‘This regulation is an important step towards better welfare, transparency and traceability – but its success will depend on effective implementation and enforcement.’ Supporting and motivating frontline veterinarians will be key, he said, adding that veterinary organisations play a crucial role in providing practical guidance to turn the new rules into meaningful improvements for animals.

(photo ©Louis-Philippe Poitras/Unsplash)

New support for rural veterinary practice in Wallonia

Tuesday, 11 August 2026



A new pilot programme in Wallonia (Belgium), aims to strengthen the future of rural veterinary practice by supporting students, young veterinarians and rural practices. *PACTE-VET rural* has been [launched](#) with the joint support of the Walloon ministers responsible for Agriculture, Economy and Animal Welfare, following

work by the Observatory of the Veterinary Profession ([Obsvet](#)). Its aim: combat workforce shortages in rural practice.

Three measures to support rural practice

Running from 2026 to 2028, the pilot, worth nearly €680,000, focuses on three areas:

1. **Early rural placements:** Veterinary students in years 2–5 will be eligible for €600 per two-week rural placement, with €300 going to the student and €300 to the placement supervisor. Up to six placements may be supported per student, within the programme's limits.
2. **Support for new rural practitioners:** Young veterinarians joining a collective rural practice can receive €5,000, with a further €5,000 available to the host practice for induction, training or equipment. Support is linked to a five-year commitment to rural veterinary practice.
3. **Helping practices retain young vets:** Rural practices can receive up to €5,000 for tailored coaching on recruitment, team organisation and retention, with the aim of creating sustainable working conditions and supporting long-term integration.

Coordinated implementation

Obsvet will coordinate implementation and annual evaluation in collaboration with the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at ULiège, the Belgian Veterinary Association ([UPV](#)) and the Order of Veterinary Surgeons of the French-speaking part of Belgium ([CRFOMV](#)). The programme will also include mentoring, monitoring and a dedicated call for projects. The practical arrangements, eligibility criteria and timetable for the first calls will be announced once approved.

As Bernard Gauthier (UPV President) stressed, '*PACTE-VET rural* represents a structured response to the challenges facing rural veterinary medicine: giving more students the opportunity to discover rural practice, helping young vets establish themselves and enabling practices to attract and retain the next generation.'

(photo © Alexander Van Steenberghe/Unsplash)

Portugal strengthens animal protection in emergencies

Monday, 10 August 2026



Portugal has formally recognised animals within its civil protection framework. [Law No. 38/2026](#), which entered into force on 8 August, requires civil protection systems to include the ‘search, rescue, evacuation, accommodation and assistance’ of animals during emergencies and disasters.

‘This is the most significant change that the Portuguese legal system has introduced to date regarding the protection of animals in emergencies and disasters,’ commented Pedro Fabrica, president of the Portuguese Veterinary Order ([OMV](#)). ‘It paves the way for coordination to cease being informal.’

Animals brought into civil protection law

Animals are now explicitly included in civil protection planning at national and municipal level. The Directorate-General for Food and Veterinary Affairs ([DGAV](#)) will participate in national and regional coordination structures and appoint representatives for animal health and welfare. Municipal veterinary authorities will also be represented in municipal civil protection commissions, while municipalities must incorporate animal emergency planning and exercises into their preparedness activities.

The law also establishes animal reception and assembly areas within emergency operations, providing logistical support for rescue, accommodation and triage.

Building veterinary emergency capacity

While the OMV contributed to the legislative process, the final law does not define the veterinary teams, facilities, resources or operational responsibilities needed to deliver animal rescue in practice. To address

these gaps, the OMV has established a Veterinary Rescue Volunteer Programme, is developing a national network of veterinary centres able to support animal rescue, and creating a technical committee on animal emergencies and disasters. Training programmes for veterinary surgeons and civil protection officers are also underway.

As OMV President Pedro Fabrica emphasised, ‘the new framework creates an important opportunity to ensure that animal rescue is planned before, rather than improvised during, a disaster.’

For more details see the [press release](#) issued by the OMV.

(image ©OMV)

UK vets raise concerns over draft CMA medicines poster

Friday, 07 August 2026



The British Veterinary Association (BVA) has [voiced concerns](#) over a draft [client poster](#) proposed by the UK's Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), warning that its wording and design could undermine trust between veterinary teams and pet owners. After a two-year investigation, the CMA published its [final report](#) earlier this year.

Part of a wider package of remedies

The poster forms part of the CMA's [wider package of remedies](#) for the companion animal sector, due to begin taking effect from September 2026. Under the proposals, practices would be required to display [a government-designed poster](#) stating that "the same medicines may be significantly cheaper online", alongside other measures aimed at increasing price transparency, ownership disclosure and access to written prescriptions.

Concern about suggestion that online meds are “significantly cheaper”

While supporting the principles of transparency and informed client choice, the BVA believes the proposed notice sends an overly simplistic message. ‘We don't have a problem with the public being made aware they can source their medication elsewhere and, in some cases, save money,’ said BVA President Rob Williams. ‘Our concern is the negative language and the suggestion that medicines are significantly cheaper online’ - which is obviously not something vets can reliably guarantee.

Online pharmacies are often owned by corporates

The Association also notes that some of the UK's largest online veterinary pharmacies are owned by major veterinary groups, raising questions about whether directing clients online could unintentionally favour larger corporate providers over independent practices.

Consultation open until 20 August

Following discussions with the profession, the CMA has already softened earlier versions of the notice, but the BVA says further revisions are needed to achieve a balanced approach that informs clients while fairly reflecting the realities of veterinary prescribing.

The [CMA is currently consulting](#) on the proposed poster and related documents until 20 August 2026, with the final materials expected before the new rules come into force later this year.

(illustration ©CMA)

West Nile virus detected in horses in Belgium and the Netherlands

Friday, 07 August 2026



West Nile virus (WNV) has been confirmed in horses in both Belgium and the Netherlands, highlighting continued spread and circulation of the mosquito-borne virus in north-western Europe. Earlier this year, the virus was detected in Germany, Austria (in birds) and France (in horses and one human).

First equine cases of 2026

Belgium confirmed its [first equine case](#) on 4 August, following earlier detection of WNV in wild birds. The unvaccinated horse, located in the Brussels area, developed severe neurological signs, including ataxia, neck stiffness, muscle tremors, blindness and excitation and was euthanised.

In the Netherlands, WNV was [detected in a horse in South Holland](#) on 5 August, marking the country's first equine case this year, following an [autochthonous case in 2025](#).

Vigilance during vector season

Most equine WNV infections remain subclinical or cause only mild signs such as fever and lethargy. However, a minority develop neurological disease, which may include ataxia, weakness, muscle fasciculations, behavioural changes, cranial nerve deficits or recumbency.

Free testing for WNV

Birds are the natural reservoir and mosquitoes the vectors, while horses and humans are dead-end hosts and do not transmit the virus onwards. Equine cases nevertheless provide an important early-warning signal for WNV circulation and potential human health risks. Alongside measures to reduce mosquito exposure, vaccination should be considered.

Veterinary services in both the Netherlands and Belgium offer free testing.

(photo ©Alkemade/Pixabay)

Novel orthobunyavirus identified in cattle in three European countries

Wednesday, 05 August 2026



Veterinary laboratories in [France](#), [Germany](#) and [Switzerland](#) have identified a previously unknown orthobunyavirus of the Simbu serogroup, closely related to Schmallenberg virus, in dairy cattle showing acute illness. The virus has been associated with signs of diarrhoea, fever, reduced appetite and a marked, though generally temporary, decline in milk production. Cases have been reported in eastern France, Switzerland and southern Germany since July. While some dairy farms remain unaffected, others have experienced widespread illness.

Related to – but distinct from – Schmallenberg virus

Metagenomic analyses in France first detected the virus in blood samples collected from affected cattle. Preliminary phylogenetic studies indicate that it belongs to the Shamonda/Schmallenberg genotype within the Simbu serogroup. German researchers subsequently confirmed a closely related virus, with whole-genome sequencing suggesting the emergence of a distinct virus. Taxonomic classification is underway.

Transmitted by biting midges

Like Schmallenberg virus, the new Shamonda-like virus is likely transmitted by *Culicoides* biting midges. Although current outbreaks mainly involve acute clinical disease in adult cattle, experts stress that reproductive effects, including abortion and congenital malformations, remain possible and require close monitoring.

Diagnostics and surveillance

Routine PCR tests for Schmallenberg virus have been negative, probably because of genetic differences between the two viruses. Diagnostic laboratories in France are therefore developing specific molecular tests, with EDTA blood samples and abortion material currently considered the preferred samples for diagnosis. Based on current knowledge, the disease does not appear to pose a risk to humans and is not considered highly contagious between animals.

Veterinarians are encouraged to remain vigilant, report suspect cases promptly and strengthen surveillance for abortions and stillbirths in both cattle and sheep while the epidemiology and clinical impact of this emerging virus continue to be investigated.

(photo ©Fabian Betto/Unsplash)

African swine fever virus detected in Finland

Saturday, 01 August 2026



Finland confirmed its first cases of African Swine Fever (ASF), after laboratory tests found the virus in the remains of three wild boar in a forest within the municipality of Virolahti, near the Baltic Sea and less than 2 km from the Russian border. The virus was detected in two dead piglets and in a long bone of wild boar, found several hundred metres away.

Spreading through Europe

Finnish authorities established an infection zone around the area where the finding was made, and the movement of pigs in the zone is restricted. African swine fever has spread from Africa to Europe and Asia, causing major losses in pig populations, triggering trade restrictions and affecting global meat markets. In Europe, seventeen countries have been infected by ASF so far this year.

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