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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION (EU) 2023/2892

of 18 December 2023

amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725 concerning certain emergency measures relating to sheep pox and goat pox in certain Member States

(notified under document C(2023)9109)

(Only the Greek and Bulgarian texts are authentic)

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health ('Animal Health Law') ([1]), and in particular Article 259(1) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Sheep pox and goat pox is an infectious viral disease affecting caprine and ovine animals and can have a severe impact on the concerned animal population and the profitability of farming causing disturbance to movements of consignments of those animals and products thereof within the Union and exports to third countries. In the event of an outbreak of that disease in caprine and ovine animals, there is a serious risk that it may spread to other establishments keeping those animals.

(2) Sheep pox and goat pox is defined as a category A disease in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882 ([2]). In addition, Commission Delegated Regulation 2020/687 ([3]) supplements the rules for the control of the listed diseases referred to in Article 9(1), points (a), (b) and (c), of Regulation (EU) 2016/429, and defined as category A, B and C diseases in Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882. In particular, Articles 21 and 22 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 provide for the establishment of a restricted zone in the event of an outbreak of a category A disease, including sheep pox and goat pox, and for certain disease control measures to be applied therein. In addition, Article 21(1) of that Delegated Regulation provides that the restricted zone is to comprise a protection zone, a surveillance zone, and, if necessary, further restricted zones around or adjacent to the protection and surveillance zones.

(3) Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725 ([4]) was adopted within the framework of Regulation (EU) 2016/429, and it lays down certain emergency measures following confirmed outbreaks of sheep pox and goat pox in Bulgaria and Greece.

(4) More particularly, Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725 provides that the restricted zones to be established by those two Member States, following outbreaks of sheep pox and goat pox, in accordance with Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687, are to comprise at least the areas listed in the Annex to that Implementing Decision. In addition, Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725 lays down certain measures to be applied in the further restricted zones, in addition to the disease control measures laid down in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687.

([1]) OJ L 84, 31.3.2016, p. 1.

([2]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882 of 3 December 2018 on the application of certain disease prevention and control rules to categories of listed diseases and establishing a list of species and groups of species posing a considerable risk for the spread of those listed diseases (OJ L 308, 4.12.2018, p. 21).

([3]) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 of 17 December 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and the Council, as regards rules for the prevention and control of certain listed diseases (OJ L 174, 3.6.2020, p. 64).

([4]) Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725 of 29 November 2023 concerning certain emergency measures relating to sheep pox and goat pox in certain Member States and repealing Implementing Decisions (EU) 2023/2067 and (EU) 2023/2470 (OJ L, 2023/2725, 4.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2023/2725/oj).

(5) In Bulgaria, no new outbreaks of sheep pox and goat pox have been reported so far since the confirmation on 16 September 2023 of a single outbreak in the province of Burgas. As a result, all restricted zones in that Member State have been lifted since 30 November 2023.

(6) Since the date of adoption of Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725, Greece has notified the Commission of two additional outbreaks of sheep pox and goat pox in establishments where ovine animals were kept, located in the regional unit of Phthiotis, in the region of Central Greece. These are the first outbreaks of sheep pox and goat pox reported in the region of Central Greece and in mainland Greece in general.

(7) The competent authority of Greece has informed the Commission of the current sheep pox and goat pox situation on its territory, following the recent outbreaks of that disease in the regional unit of Phthiotis, and it has taken the necessary disease control measures required in accordance with Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687.

(8) In order to prevent any unnecessary disturbance to trade within the Union and to avoid unjustified barriers to trade by third countries, it is necessary to rapidly identify at Union level the restricted zones for sheep pox and goat pox, which comprise the protection and surveillance zones, as well as the further restricted zones in Greece, in collaboration with this Member State. Furthermore, in view of the current epidemiological situation, it is necessary to extend the size and/or duration of these zones, including the previously established further restricted zone in the island of Lesvos.

(9) Accordingly, the areas identified as protection, surveillance and further restricted zones in Greece should be set out in the Annex to this Decision and the duration of that regionalisation fixed.

(10) As this Decision lays down identical measures to those already laid down in Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725, which Bulgaria and Greece are currently applying, it is appropriate that this Decision applies in those two Member States respectively from the same dates as those listed in that Implementing Decision, as regards the areas listed in the Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725 before the amendments made to it by this Decision. However, for the areas inserted in the Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725 due to the amendments made to that Annex by this Decision, it should apply from the date of notification of this Decision.

(11) Taking into account the current epidemiological situation in the Union as regards sheep pox and goat pox, the period of application of Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725 should be extended, and it should apply until 15 April 2024.

(12) Given the urgency of the epidemiological situation in the Union as regards the spread of sheep pox and goat pox, it is important that the amendments to be made to Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725, by this Decision, apply as soon as possible.

(13) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Amendments to Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725

Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725 is amended as follows:

1. Article 5 is replaced by the following:

‘*Article 5*

Application

This Decision shall apply:

(a) for the areas listed in the Annex for Bulgaria from 26 September 2023;

(b) for the areas listed in the Annex for the Region of North Aegean in Greece from 31 October 2023, and for the areas listed in the Annex for the Region of Central Greece in Greece from 18 December 2023.

This Decision shall apply until 15 April 2024.';

2. the Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725 is amended in accordance with the Annex to this Decision.

Article 2

Addressees

This Decision is addressed to the Republic of Bulgaria and to the Hellenic Republic.

Done at Brussels, 18 December 2023.

For the Commission
Stella KYRIAKIDES
Member of the Commission

ANNEX

In the Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725, Part 2 concerning Greece is replaced by the following:

'2. **GREECE**

A. **Protection and surveillance zones established around confirmed outbreaks**

Region and ADIS reference number of the outbreak	Areas established as protection and surveillance zones, part of the restricted zone in Greece referred to in Article 1	Date until applicable
Region of Central Greece GR-CAPRIPOX-2023-00002 GR-CAPRIPOX-2023-00003	Protection zone: Those parts of the regional unit of Phthiotis, contained within a circle of a radius of 10 kilometres, centred on UTM 30, ETRS89 coordinates Lat. 38.632418, Long. 23.182044 (2023/2); Lat. 38.624906, Long. 23.155387 (2023/3)	14.1.2024
	Surveillance zone: A surveillance zone that comprises the following areas: — in the regional unit of Phthiotis, the Municipality of Lokroi; — in the regional unit of Boeotia, the Municipality of Orchomenos.	23.1.2024
	Surveillance zone: Those parts of the regional unit of Phthiotis, contained within a circle of a radius of 10 kilometres, centred on UTM 30, ETRS89 coordinates Lat. 38.632418, Long. 23.182044 (2023/2); Lat. 38.624906, Long. 23.155387 (2023/3)	15.1.2024 to 23.1.2024

B. **Further restricted zones**

Region	Areas established as further restricted zones in Greece as referred to in Article 1	Date until applicable
Region of North Aegean	A further restricted zone that comprises the entire territory of the regional unit of Lesvos.	15.3.2024
Region of Central Greece	A further restricted zone that comprises: — the entire territory of the regional unit of Phthiotis; — the entire territory of the regional unit of Boeotia; — in the regional unit of Euboea, the entire territory of the municipality of Chalcis.	15.3.2024'