



Ref: VITT 1200/RVF Kenya

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Rift Valley Fever in Kenya

Note: Defra's International Animal Health Division (IAHD) monitors outbreaks of specified disease around the world. Rift Valley Fever (RVF) is among those diseases of concern.

Disease Report

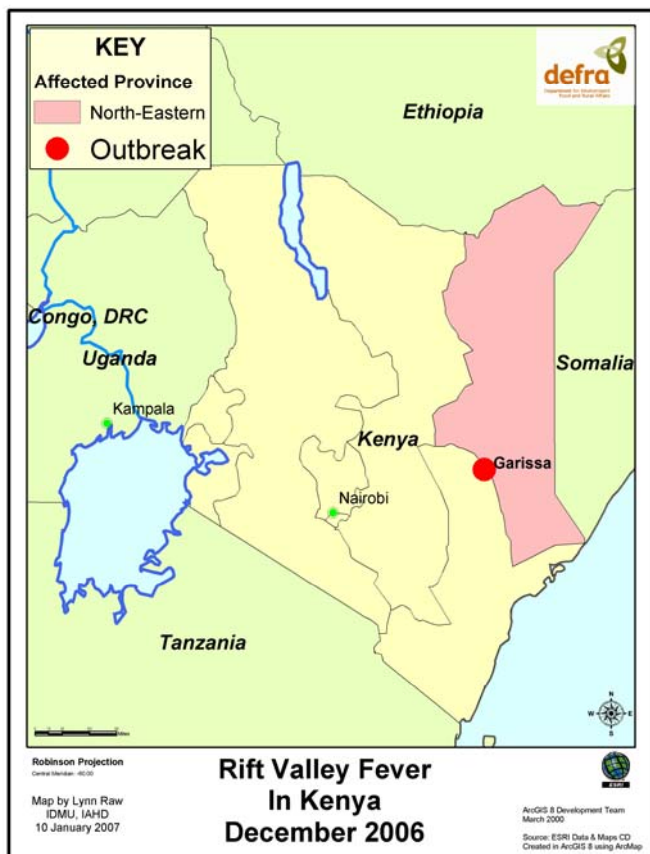
An outbreak of Rift Valley Fever (RVF) was confirmed in the North-Eastern province of Kenya (Galmagara village, Garissa district) in late December 2006 (see map). The outbreak has affected sheep, goats, cattle and camels (OIE, 2007). The disease has also been reported in humans in the same district in Kenya (WHO, 2006).

Situation Assessment

The last case of RVF in animals in Kenya was reported in 2002. RVF is a viral disease within the genus *Phlebovirus* (family Bunyaviridae). The disease causes high mortality in young animals and abortion in ruminants. It affects cattle, sheep, goats, camels, wild ruminants, including buffaloes, gnus (wildebeest) and antelopes while African monkeys and domestic dogs and cats may get short-lived infections (OIE, 2002). The virus has also been found in rodents (Pretorius and others, 1997) and bats (Fontanille and others, 1998).

The virus is usually transmitted to susceptible species by arthropod vectors (various mosquito genera, mainly *Aedes*, *Culex* and *Mansonia* spp.), but has also been found in ticks and sandflies that have fed on the blood of infected animals.

The virus is also transmitted transovarially in *Aedes* mosquitoes. Infected *Aedes* eggs may remain dormant in the dried mud of surface pools for several years until persistent rain causes flooding and the eggs to hatch. While the disease is usually associated with heavy rains or



flooding followed by the emergence of high numbers of the mosquito vectors, some localised areas of Kenya, South Africa, West Africa and Zimbabwe have a low level of virus transmission to ruminants in most years (OIE, 2002; Fontanille and others, 1998; Geering and others, 1995).



The distribution of RVF is almost exclusively in Africa but also extends into the Arabian peninsula (see map opposite).

EU rules do not allow the import of live animals or unprocessed animal products from Kenya.

Conclusion

Based on the disease report and current information, there is a negligible risk of introducing the disease to the UK by legal trade.

We will continue to monitor developments and will re-assess the situation as new information becomes available.

References

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