

## Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies In Small Ruminants In Switzerland: Results of A One Year Full Survey

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Scrapie is known in sheep and goats since 250 years and is currently not considered a human health hazard., whereas the occurrence of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in the sheep and goat population (SGP) is. In 1996, BSE was experimentally transmitted to sheep and the diagnosis of BSE in a goat in 2005 confirmed the spread of BSE to the SGP.

Due to the potential of BSE in the SGP, the EU countries have conducted large surveys since 2002. The screening tests used can detect both BSE and Scrapie.

In Switzerland, eight cases of Scrapie had been found in the last 20 years, indicating a low prevalence of TSE in the SGP. Due to the very low prevalence, testing only a sample of the SGP would not expand the knowledge on TSE occurrence. Thus, in Switzerland a comprehensive one year survey was conducted. Two-thirds of all slaughtered sheep and goats and all fallen stock over 12 months of age were sampled and tested for TSE.

Thirty thousand samples from healthy slaughtered animals and 3,000 samples from fallen stock have been tested from June 2004 to July 2005. Of eight Scrapie cases found, seven cases, two in goats and five in sheep, were considered to be "atypical". No case of BSE was found. The survey data are analysed using stochastic and Bayesian methods. First results show that an occurrence of BSE in the SGP of >5 cases can be ruled out reliably and an endemic situation for Scrapie is very unlikely.