

NCD CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR THE NETHERLANDS

Attached is the contingency plan for dealing with outbreaks of Newcastle disease (NCD) in the Netherlands, in accordance with **Annex VI of Directive 92/66/EEC**.

The criteria published in **Commission Working document SANCO/3637/99 (PVET/99/EN/3637.doc)** were used as a guidance.

Veterinary Service,
Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries.

March 2000

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This document sets out the contingency plan for Newcastle Disease (NCD) as drawn up in March 2000 for the Netherlands.

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SECTION 1. LEGAL POWERS

1.1 Statutory Powers

- The Animal Health and Welfare Act
- The Dry Rendering Act
- The Meat Inspection Act
- The Veterinary Practice Act

1.2.1 Notification of Suspected NCD

EU regulation regarding control of animal disease has been implemented in the Animal Health and Welfare Act. Article 3 of the Act deals with the control measures to be undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries for diseases in cattle, poultry, bees, minks and other mammals and fish. In the Regulation on notification of infectious veterinary diseases (Articles 3 and 7) NCD is denoted as infectious veterinary disease in poultry and other birds, bringing it under the scope of Article 3.

Articles 19 and 100 of the Act require compulsory notification of suspected NCD by the owner and the veterinarian. A special incident desk has been set up that can be contacted 24 hours per day. The course of action on receipt of a notification of NCD is set down in the standing instructions. As soon as poultry is suspected of being infected the measures set down in Article 4 of Directive 92/66/EEG are taken. The mayor of the municipality takes the required measures as soon as possible. As most of the cases require emergency action, the head of district of the National Inspection Service for Livestock and Meat usually takes the necessary action and informs the mayor immediately (Article 21 of the Act). In addition, under Article 14 of the Veterinary Practice Act, every veterinarian is obliged to conduct his profession according to the normal rules and practices. This means that the veterinarian is also obliged to ensure that no damage is inflicted to animal health or that there is damage to public health or the national economy.

1.2.2 Slaughter of infected and animals suspected of being infected

Article 5, sub-paragraph a of Directive 92/66/EEC lays down that immediately NCD is officially confirmed on a farm, all poultry present on the farm must immediately be slaughtered on site. Under domestic law slaughter of diseased animals or animals suspected of being diseased can be carried out under Article 22, paragraph 1, sub-paragraph f of the Animal Health and Welfare Act.

1.2.3 Destruction of carcasses and access to sites to be used for this purpose

Under Article 2, paragraph 1 a, of the Dry Rendering Act animal waste originating from animals slaughtered under measures to combat the spread of veterinary disease are designated high-risk material. Article 3 of this Act lays down that high-risk material must be rendered harmless under the terms laid down in the Act. The rendering plant has a legal responsibility to destroy material delivered to it under measures to combat the spread of veterinary disease.

1.2.4 Payment of compensation

The Animal Health and Welfare Act has a closed system of compensation. This is set out in detail in Articles 85 to 90 of the Animal Health and Welfare Act. Article 86 of this

Act states that compensation can be granted from the Animal Health Fund if animals were slaughtered or rendered harmless under measures to combat infectious animal diseases. Compensation for animals suspected of being diseased equals the value of the healthy animal, for diseased animals 50% of that value, for dead animals 0% of that value and for products and materials the value at the moment the measures were taken, with the provision that the amounts so determined can be decreased by general measures determined by the government. The value will be assessed by an official poultry valuer. The Minister will inform the owner of the amount as soon as the valuation has been made and accepted.

Conditions may be attached to the granting of compensation regarding the layout, hygiene, re-stocking of the animals and veterinary supervision of the farm. This could also apply to the rules which may be set for the levies raised to fund the compensatory payments. The Minister could reduce compensation, withhold payment or demand repayment if it is determined that the conditions have not been met.

1.2.5 Cleaning and disinfecting and other measures to be taken with regard to buildings and land

Under Article 22, paragraph 1 h of the Animal Health and Welfare Act, the officer attending on the basis of Article 21 of the Act can order the cleaning and disinfection of buildings, land, manure silos and storage areas. These measures are laid down in Articles 7 and 8 of the Regulation concerning the execution of measures to combat infectious animal diseases.

1.2.6 Standstill orders and limitation of movement orders

As soon as NCD is officially confirmed the competent authorities must delineate a protection area around the infected farm with a radius of at least 3 km and a surveillance zone with a radius of at least 10 km (Article 9, 92/40/EEG).

Article 30 of the Animal Health and Welfare Act forms the basis for the standstill orders to be put in place to combat the spread of animal disease. In addition, under this Article warning signs must be placed.

Under the procedure set down in Article 31 of the Animal Health and Welfare Act the necessary regulation comes into force immediately after it has been made known to the media.

Under Article 30, paragraph 1 of the Act, the Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries may ban the transport of animals, products or materials which could be carriers of contamination, in the whole of the Netherlands, or in certain areas of it.

Under Article 30, paragraph 2 of the Act the head inspector of the district may announce a standstill order around a farm infected or suspected of being infected.

Under Article 22, paragraph 1, sub-paragraph d of the Act buildings and land can be declared infected or suspected of being infected by posting official notices.

As soon as a notice has been posted the farm concerned automatically becomes subject to the following general legal provisions:

A ban on animals, products and materials that could be carriers of infection entering or leaving the farm is set down in the Decision on transport to and from buildings and land contaminated or thought to be contaminated under Article 25, paragraph 1 of the Act.

Restricted access for persons is set down in the Decision on access of individuals or groups to buildings or land contaminated or thought to be contaminated under Article 25, paragraph 2.

The compulsory cleaning and disinfection of persons leaving the farm is set down in the Regulation on leaving building and land contaminated or thought to be contaminated, under Article 26 of the Act.

1.2.7 Vaccination

In the Netherlands, preventive vaccination is mandatory for all commercially-raised chickens and turkeys. This requirement also exists for poultry, walkers, and carrier pigeons taking part in exhibitions (*Regeling betreffende het bijeenbrengen van dieren* 1992, Bulletin of Acts, Orders and Decrees of the Kingdom of the Netherlands 585) and for carrier pigeons taking part in organised races. The requirement for and method of vaccination are set out in the 1976 NCD regulation of the Commodity Board for Livestock, Meat and Eggs (PPE).

1.3. Enforcement

Under Article 114 of the Animal Health and Welfare Act officials designated by the Minister are responsible for compliance with disease control as determined by in accordance with this Act. Detection of punishable offences is the responsibility of the officials so designated under the Criminal Code.

1.4 Penalties

Violations of Article 3 of the Animal Health and Welfare act are punishable under the Economic Offences Act. If a veterinarian does not fulfil his duty of care in the practice of veterinary medicine the measures set down under Article 16 of the Veterinary Practice Act come into force. These measures can be imposed by a disciplinary tribunal.

SECTION 2. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

2.1 Personnel

The cost of staff employed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries (Veterinarians, office staff, laboratory staff and officials of the General Inspection Service) is covered by moneys voted to the Ministry each year. If additional personnel are required on a temporary basis their cost is borne by the emergency fund for the control of contagious diseases, which is funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries and the Commodity Board of Agriculture on a 50/50 basis. If the cost are larger than the amount in the Fund, the rest is paid for by the Government.

The costs covered in this Fund include not only the pay but also personnel-related running costs, e.g. travel and subsistence.

2.1.1 Equipment and consumable items

The costs of equipment and consumable items are covered by the Fund. Small equipment and consumable items are in stock.

Major capital items on call to hire or to buy from commercial firms. These costs are also covered by the Fund.

2.1.2 Slaughter, transport of carcasses and transport and destruction of contaminated material, sanitation

These costs are covered by the Fund.

2.1.3 Compensation payments

Compensation payments are paid out of the Fund. Once valuation is agreed payment is authorised by the District Inspectors of the Veterinary Service and the mayor of the municipality concerned and passed to the Director of the Veterinary Service (CVO) for payment. In general payment takes place within one month after valuation.

2.1.4 Emergency vaccination and identification

As a rule the costs of vaccine, emergency vaccination and identification are provided for by the Fund, although there is an opportunity for the Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries in Art. 9 of the Livestock Act to decide that these costs are in total or partly on the account of the owner of the livestock concerned.

2.2 Timely compensation

The co-operation of the farming community can be relied on only if compensation for depopulated poultry flocks is paid promptly. The Netherlands endeavour to ensure that payments are made no later than 60 days after depopulation/destruction.

SECTION 3. THE CHAIN OF COMMAND AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL DISEASE CONTROL CENTRE

Introduction

The chain of command is described in the crisis decision-making manual (“*LNV handboek crisisbesluitvorming*”) set down by the official department management. This manual can be found on the Ministry’s Internet web site (<http://www.minInv.nl/>) and those who could become involved with combating NCD are familiar with it. This contingency plan incorporates the parts of the manual which can be used during an outbreak of NCD.

3.1 LNV chain of command

In the event of an outbreak of NCD, the secretary general of LNV is the official leader of the LNV chain of command (see diagram). To effectively combat an outbreak, the following measures will be taken:

- The Departmental Crisis centre (DCC-LNV) will be activated (see 3.2).
- The emergency staff will be assembled, and will meet in room 9H06 of the Ministry’s main building
 - the emergency staff is made up of: secretary general (SG) as head, director general, CVO (also co-ordinator of the operations team), information director, director of VVM (Veterinary and Food Policy), DL (Agriculture Department), RVV, ID-Lelystad and AID, the relevant regional director (also co-ordinating director of the RCC), the crisis management co-ordinator and the secretariat will be led by a policy staff member of VVM.
- One or more regional LNV crisis centres (RCC-LNV) will be activated (**see Chapter 4**).

3.2 The national (departmental) crisis centre

The Departmental Crisis Centre acts as supporting and/or executive staff and facilitator in service of the LNV crisis organisation, in which every outbreak of an OIE-listed A disease is treated in theory as a crisis. When the DCC is activated, a process manager is appointed by the SG (in consultation with the crisis staff, including the CVO) charged with all facilities-, personnel- and other non-policy-related matters needing arrangements.

- The departmental crisis centre (DCC) is housed in the main building of the Ministry of LNV, Bezuidenhoutseweg 73 in rooms 11, 13, 14, 16, 17 and 18 in the 3000 hallway. These rooms, normally used as meeting rooms, can be set up in emergencies as crisis centres.
- The address is
 - Bezuidenhoutseweg 73
 - Post box 20401
 - 2500 EK Den Haag
 - Telephone 070-3785221
 - Fax 070-3786113.

De LNV crisis organisation has the general duty to:

- make recommendations to the Minister of LNV about measures to take;

- assembling and evaluating information about the national and international situation;
- take measures to ensure a lawful and efficient carrying out of the decisions taken by the Minister of LNV.
- maintain the necessary internal and external contacts including informing citizens and other involved persons.

The crisis staff (a part of the LNV crisis organisation) is primarily concerned with the main policy and regulatory decisions and has as its job:

- evaluating the crisis situation;
- formulating/evaluating the possible policy options;
- making recommendations to Minister of LNV about policy measures to be taken;
- measures to take to ensure a legal and efficient execution of policy decisions taken by the Minister of LNV ;
- translating policy decisions into assignments for the operational team;
- formulating/evaluating the communication/information strategy to be followed.

3.3 The operations team

De crisis staff are supported by the operations team which is charged with:

- gathering and interpreting information, setting up a policy information system;
- formulating policy proposals;
- executing policy decisions;
- preparing situation reports.

The operations team is under day-to-day management of the CVO, who is responsible for:

- harmonising the work of the operations team with existing regional teams and workers in the field;
- communication and harmonisation about the formulated policy proposals with the regional and field teams before they are submitted to the crisis staff for decision.

The operational team will be housed in the crisis centre in rooms 11, 13 and 16 of the main building.

3.4 The DCC has at its disposal the following facilities:

- audio-visual equipment
 - video-conferencing facility for 8 people
 - overhead projector which can be linked to the video system
 - radio
 - television
 - video
 - direct connection to Lower House
- communications equipment and information systems
 - direct connection to the public telephone network
 - connection to the national emergency network
 - fax connections
 - variable network connections suitable for voice and data transmissions
- meeting facilities
 - whiteboard(s), flip-over
 - overhead +

- projector screen
- necessary information
 - maps of the Netherlands (both large-scale national and detailed maps)
- LNV crisis decision-making manual including important telephone and fax numbers, addresses and emergency network numbers.

3.5 The National Crisis Centre

The national RVV has set up a national crisis centre to give veterinary-technical support for the operational team and the local crisis centre. Along with the regional crisis teams, it concentrates on implementation of the main decisions and is responsible for their execution.

SECTION 4. DISEASE CONTROL AT LOCAL LEVEL

4.1 Responsibilities

NCD preparedness and control of a NCD outbreak at the local level is the responsibility of the Head of the District of the Veterinary Inspection Service. Each of the five centres is headed by a senior veterinarian who is directly responsible to the head of the National Disease Control Centre.

4.2 List of disease control centres

The National disease control centre maintains a list of local disease control centres giving for each the name of the veterinarian in charge, the address of the centre, its telephone, telex, fax number and e-mail address and a map showing the area under its control; this list is available to the Commission as required.

4.3 Temporary disease control centre

In the event of a disease outbreak the CVO may decide to set up a temporary disease control centre conveniently located close to the disease outbreak. This centre is preferably within the surveillance zone surrounding the primary outbreak. If such a temporary centre is established the Netherlands will inform the Commission of its geographical location and the territory it is responsible for.

4.4. Veterinarian in charge of local disease control centre

The local disease control centres are in charge of a veterinarian who is directly responsible to the veterinarian at the national disease control centre. All staff allocated to a centre for the period of the disease emergency are under his/her command. He/she has the necessary authority to:

- Designate a holding as an “infected premises” (after consultation with, and the sanction of, the national disease control centre if that is considered necessary)
- Deploy the necessary staff and equipment to infected premises,
- Arrange valuation and slaughter of infected and contact poultry, the disposal of carcasses and contaminated material and sanitation procedures,
- Advise on the delineation of protection and surveillance zones; close live-bird markets and abattoirs as necessary,
- Stay in contact with police and other authorities over the designation of infected premises and the maintenance of standstill orders and other restrictions.

4.5 Equipment

The local centres are equipped with;

- adequate telephone, telex, fax and e-mail communications. One line is reserved for communication with the national disease control centre.
- Record systems
- Maps covering the territory overseen by the centre (minimally 1:50,000)
- Lists of persons and organisations in the area covered by the centre to be contacted in the event of a disease outbreak:
- Facilities for informing the press and other media so that all persons are fully aware of the restrictions in force.
- Equipment stores (see section 7)
- Facilities for cleaning and disinfecting personnel, clothing and vehicles.

SECTION 5. EXPERT GROUPS

5.1 Expert groups

There are several types of expert groups in the Netherlands:

- At the national level: the veterinary epidemiological consultative committee (VEO)
- At the regional level:
 - team of specialists who visit infected farms and farms thought to be infected and find out what contacts have been made during the danger period;
 - the tracing team, a special team of specialists geared to tracing possible contacts;
 - the epidemiological team, a team that follows up reports from the specialist teams examines the epidemiology and reports on it.

5.2 Veterinary epidemiological consultative committee (VEO)

The national expert group (VEO) has the following responsibilities:

- In the event of a primary outbreak, they conduct an immediate epidemiological enquiry that provides a broad assessment of the risk involved.
- During the course of the disease control campaigns they deal with particular problems as they emerge and they provide advice to the heads of disease control centres,
- At all times they maintain expertise within the Netherlands and develop new control strategies and techniques where necessary,
- they train and advise other staff on disease emergency measures.

5.3 Specialist teams

The specialist team carries out tracing from a primary outbreak and will describe

- The situation at the infected holding
- The number and species of susceptible and other livestock; the method of husbandry,
- The number of clinically affected animals and the estimated age of the oldest lesion(s),
- The size and location of the holding and its relationships with other holdings, public roads, etc.
- The local meteorological situation from the KNMI
- The recent movements (poultry and personnel) on and off the holding

5.4 Epidemiologists

On the basis of these findings, combined with findings of other holdings the epidemiological team will advise the local or national centre on;

- The possible origin of the infection
- The likely period of infection on the premises,
- The holdings most at risk from airborne spread or from movements,
- Tracing and other measures that need to be undertaken to limit the spread of disease.

5.5 Local expert group, do's

The local expert groups are provided with communication equipment and adequate sampling equipment. Mobile accommodation may be provided and sited just beyond the disinfection barrier outside the infected premises.

5.6 Local expert group, don'ts

The central expert group is not responsible for the slaughter and disposal of poultry and other routine measures on infected premises. These tasks are the responsibility of special teams at the local disease control centres.

5.7 Training

Members of expert groups are receiving a high level of training. If a Community training programme existed (see section 11), this training could be based on it.

5.8 Other Experts

In addition to the experts mentioned above the national crisis centre also has staff at its disposal that concentrate on specific aspects of the control of animal disease, for instance specialists in cleaning and disinfection and hygiene.

SECTION 6. PERSONNEL RESOURCES

(Note: numbers in square brackets refer to section numbers in the Recommendations for Contingency Plans document SANCO/3637/99)

6.1 [6.2] list of staff

At the national disease control centre a list of the staff available to deal with a disease emergency is available. The National Inspection Service for Livestock and Meat (RVV) is responsible for the provision of an adequate number of well-qualified staff both at the national and regional level.

6.2 [6.3] Agreements

Personnel that is not under the direct control of the CVO are bound by a standing agreement between the CVO and the employers of such personnel for their immediate release. There are, for instance, standing agreements on the deployment of personnel with the Animal Health Service (*GD*) and the Royal Dutch Veterinary Association (*KNMvD*). The Animal Health Service is responsible for ensuring that well qualified personnel, specialised in Newcastle Disease is available and guarantees that in an outbreak of disease they can be deployed under the command of the National Inspection Service for Livestock and Meat (*RVV*). The Royal Dutch Veterinary Association has the names and addresses of all practising veterinarians in the Netherlands and provides support in the recruitment of extra personnel in times of crisis. This could be practising veterinarians or veterinary students for support tasks.

6.3 [6.6] National disease control centres

The veterinarian in charge of the national disease control centre has at her/his command veterinarians and other staff who have been trained in the management of disease emergencies

6.4 [6.7] Local disease control centres

Local disease control centres are normally staffed as follows:

- The officer in charge is a veterinarian
- 2 - 3 veterinarians
- 2 - 4 lay support staff for field duties
- 2 - 5 office support staff

6.5 [6.8 + 6.11] Training

The veterinarians are trained in the diagnosis of AI and NCD

6.6 [6.9] Expert groups

The composition of the central expert group (VEO) may vary but shall consist of at least:

- a senior veterinarian
- 2 veterinarians with a scientific research background from the Central Veterinary Institute
- 1 veterinary epidemiologist
- 1 veterinarian from the National Inspection Service for Livestock and Meat
- 1 veterinarian from the National Animal Health Service

- administrative personnel
- [6.10] advice from a meteorologist of the KNMI is always available

6.7 [6.12] Personnel resources in the Netherlands

The Netherlands ensure that sufficient trained staff are immediately available.

SECTION 7. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES RESOURCES

7.1 Availability

Since effective control of NCD depends on the immediate availability of equipment and immediate access to facilities, the following equipment is readily available.

7.2 Equipment

The Netherlands do have available at local disease control centres or some other convenient place the following equipment:

- Protective clothing
- Disinfectants effective against NCD virus, detergents and soaps
- Pumps, shovel and scrapers
- Humane killers and lethal drugs
- Autopsy and sampling equipment
- Sign posts/warning notices for use at infected premises and in protection/surveillance zones
- Maps
- Vaccination equipment

7.3 Access

The veterinarian in charge of the national disease control centre has standing arrangements for access to:

- Vehicles
- Combustible materials
- Digging equipment
- Flame guns (for sterilising metal)
- Knapsack sprayers and other means of sanitation.

7.4 Transport of carcasses

Since carcasses must be transported to rendering plants in sealed vehicles, the Netherlands ensure that these facilities are available in sufficient quantity to deal with major epidemics.

7.5 Office equipment

Each local disease control centre has office equipment available including:

- Office furniture, photocopiers, etc.,
- Record systems specifically designed for NCD outbreaks; these may be computer-based
- Standing instructions including pre-printed forms (restrictions, valuation, epidemiological, public, tracing, movements)

7.6 Pre-printed forms

If the Commission wishes to examine the notices and forms so as to advise on the possibility of harmonisation within the Community, the Netherlands will hand these over to the Commission.

SECTION 8. STANDING INSTRUCTIONS

8.1

A copy of the standing instructions to staff is attached in Annex II. This was last revised in May 1999. These instructions cover the questions of chapter 8.

SECTION 9. DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORIES

9.1 Laboratories

Confirmation of an NCD diagnosis is carried out by the Research Institute for Animal Health (*ID-Lelystad*) which is fully equipped for this purpose. The tests are carried out according to the procedures laid down in Annex II of the Council Directive 92/66/EEC for the control of Newcastle disease". The tests take between 2 and 21 days. Positive results of the laboratory tests are communicated by the Director of ID-Lelystad directly to the CVO. Samples are taken and sent under authority of the RVV . Samples can be sent within 2 to 3 hours to *ID-Lelystad* from all parts of the country. Sampling instruments are stored at every inspection district office and at the Animal Health Service. If necessary, further support is possible from the Health Service laboratory.

9.2 Capacity

The estimated laboratory capacity immediately available for NCD testing is 170-340 samples per 14 days. By pooling samples in batches of 5 the capacity could be increased to between 850-1700. Extra capacity can be created within a few weeks by training and deploying extra personnel. The training takes approximately 3 weeks. The Animal Health Service laboratory can also be used for preparatory work, supplying personnel or screening tests.

SECTION 10. VACCINATION

In the Netherlands, preventive vaccination is mandatory for all commercially-raised chickens and turkeys. This requirement also exists for poultry, walkers, and carrier pigeons participating in exhibitions (*Regeling betreffende het bijeenbrengen van dieren 1992*, Bulletin of Acts, Orders and Decrees of the Kingdom of the Netherlands 585) and for carrier pigeons taking part in organised races. The requirement for and method of vaccination are set out in the 1976 NCD regulation of the Commodity Board for Livestock, Meat and Eggs (PPE).

10.1 Legal possibilities

Only registered NCD vaccines may be used. Requirements for NCD vaccines are set out in the European Pharmacopeia.

10.2 [10.5/6/7] Administration

Vaccinations may only be administered by a veterinarian in possession of a co-operation agreement with the Animal Health Service.

10.3 Controls

Controls of vaccination status are carried out at the request of PPE by the Animal Health Service. Control of the effectiveness of vaccination is only regularly performed on reproduction and breeding stock.

SECTION 11. TRAINING PROGRAMMES

11.1 Expert groups:

In Annex III the regular training programmes of the Netherlands for expert groups are stated. These training programmes include training in clinical diagnosis, epidemiological enquiries (tracing and surveillance), and infected premises procedures.

11.2 [11.4] Training of other staff involved in NCD control:

Written down in Annex II and in Annex III. This includes:

- The diagnosis of NCD
- Procedures at infected premises and within protection and surveillance zones,
- Procedures at local disease control centres
- Procedures at national disease control centres,
- Tracing exercises, record keeping,
- Notification and publicity procedures.

Each year two veterinarians will be nominated to attend Community-based NCD training courses when these are established.

SECTION 12. PUBLICITY AND DISEASE AWARENESS

12.1 Reporting requirement

The Animal Health and Welfare Act states that if an animal shows symptoms of a contagious disease, this must be reported to the authorities by the livestock holder and veterinarian. To eliminate confusion, a national 24-hour telephone line has been opened. It was announced with a publicity campaign.

In cases of, for example, an increased risk of outbreak due to a disease in another Member State, there is a possibility of deploying extra legal powers.

An extra incentive for reporting suspicious cases comes from the so-called discount on compensation applied if these incidents are not reported in time. The same effect is achieved by compensation of sick animals for 50% of their value in healthy condition. No compensation is given for dead animals.

Holdings reporting sick animals are visited by a team of RVV specialists who decide if further action is necessary, depending on the situation of the holding.

12.2 Publicity

Through publications in the journal of the Royal Dutch Veterinary Association, articles in the farming press (*Agrarisch Dagblad*, poultry farmers' health service) and publications by the Animal Health Service the awareness of NCD for veterinarians (the "*GD Veterinair*", a newsletter for veterinarians) and farmers is maintained.

Disease awareness campaigns targeted at farmers and professional personnel who regularly visit flocks are held when needed. We then use the "*GD Pluimvee*", a newsletter for poultry farmers and the "*Pluimveehouderij*", a magazine for poultry farmers. Besides these publications, various Internet sites (<http://www.gd-dieren.nl/pages/frames/frplvzkv.htm>, <http://www.europa.eu.int/> and <http://www.oie.int/>) are used to maintain disease awareness.

12.3 Veterinary education

During veterinary studies, clinical symptoms and epidemiology of NCD are thoroughly studied. The control measures and notification procedures are discussed more generally for highly infectious animal diseases. Students are advised to consult the Internet to keep abreast of the epidemiological situation in Member and non-Member States.

In post-graduate veterinary medicinal education, especially the new programmes for accredited veterinarians, great attention is paid to the veterinarian's responsibility for the general good. The KNMvD is very much involved with ICT, and have their own Internet site. The OIE site highlights the epidemiological situation in other Member States and non-member countries.

12.4 Agricultural education

Agricultural education also covers the clinical symptoms of the various diseases, including NCD, as well as the notification procedures and measures. Agricultural education also is making use of the possibilities that the Internet offers for maintaining awareness of the situation elsewhere.