

Brussels, 1st October 2026

UECBV Ref: MV - 33871

Joint Webinar on Shamonda Virus in Europe

Main Outcomes

UECBV Secretariat attended a joint webinar on the identification and current status of Shamonda virus circulation in several European countries, co-organised by FVE (Federation of Veterinarians of Europe), FLI (Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut), ENVT (National Veterinary College of Toulouse) and RGS/SBS (Swiss Bovine Health Service) on 29 September 2026.

Speakers: Kerstin Wernike (FLI), Jean-Luc Guérin (ENVT), Helen Huber (RGS/SBS).

1. Situation in Germany

Kerstin Wernike, a veterinary specialist in virology at the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut (FLI), presented the evolution of the Shamonda virus outbreak in Germany.

The virus was identified at the end of July, following the submission to the FLI of several samples from acutely affected cattle from four herds. The animals presented with fever, reduced milk production and, in some cases, diarrhea. Clinical signs were mild, but morbidity was high. Laboratory testing ruled out several diseases, including BTV, EHDV and bovine coronavirus, while pan-Simbu virus RT-qPCR yielded positive results.

Whole-genome sequencing enabled the identification of a “Shamonda-like” virus, which has now been confirmed as belonging to a European clade of Shamonda virus.

Viruses of the Simbu serogroup are orthobunyaviruses with a genome consisting of three negative-sense RNA segments (S, M and L). The main immunogen is the Gc protein, encoded by the M segment. These viruses are transmitted by biting midges (*Culicoides* spp.) and usually cause mild clinical signs. However, abortions, stillbirths and fetal malformations may also occur. Neurological signs have been reported for some viruses in this serogroup, such as Shuni virus. Schmallenberg virus (SBV) also belongs to this group and was previously introduced into Europe. Before the current Shamonda virus outbreak, SBV was the only virus of the Simbu serogroup known to occur in Europe.

Until 2026, Shamonda virus had only been reported sporadically in western, eastern and southern Africa, as well as in Japan. Reports from these regions have included virus-associated fetal malformations. Similar cases involving hydranencephaly and brachygnathia have since been reported in Switzerland and Germany. The speaker noted that the preferred sample for detecting the virus in aborted fetuses is brain tissue, followed by spleen and blood.

Two clades of the virus are currently present in Germany: Shamonda virus Europe 1 (SHAV-EU1) and Europe 2 (SHAV-EU2). SHAV-EU1 was the first clade detected, with cases identified simultaneously in southern Germany, France and Switzerland, whereas SHAV-EU2 was identified later in northern Germany. The map on the right shows the situation in Germany as





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of 2 September. The two clades are thought to result from two independent introductions and can be distinguished diagnostically.

The speaker noted that the origin of these introductions remains unknown and will likely remain so, as is still the case for the introduction of Schmallenberg virus more than a decade ago.

SHAV-EU1 has been detected in cattle, horses, sheep, goats and alpacas. However, the range of animal species affected by SHAV-EU2 remains unclear, as only cases in cattle have been reported so far.

Cases in horses were unexpected because neurological signs are not known to be associated with Shamonda virus. However, such signs have been reported with Shuni virus, which belongs to the same serogroup and is endemic in South Africa and the Middle East.

2. Situation in France

Jean-Luc Guérin, professor at the National Veterinary College of Toulouse (ENVT), presented the evolution of the Shamonda virus outbreak in France.

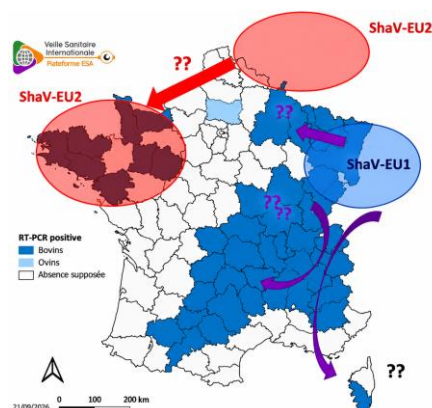
He described the beginning of the outbreak, when a mysterious disease was reported almost simultaneously in three countries: France, Germany and Switzerland. He highlighted that the very first report occurred in early July in the Doubs department in France, where several dairy farmers had already been reporting diarrhea in their cattle for several weeks. However, the situation was difficult to interpret, particularly because the country was experiencing a severe heatwave, making it challenging to determine whether a viral infection was involved.

A second series of cases occurred on 24 July in Haute-Savoie. Blood samples were collected from cows presenting with fever and sent to the laboratory at the Veterinary College of Toulouse.

Initial investigations were conducted independently but simultaneously by three laboratories: ENVT in France, the FLI in Germany and the IVI in Switzerland.

The virus subsequently spread across the country, with ongoing dissemination of SHAV-EU1 from the initial emergence hotspot towards the west and south, alongside independent detections of SHAV-EU2 in Normandy, Mayenne and Brittany. All reported outbreaks have involved cattle, with one exception: a single outbreak in sheep was reported in the Oise department. Both variants are currently present and circulating in France.

The initial infection causes fever, diarrhea and a drop in milk production. However, abortions have been reported three to five weeks after infection. The impact on newborn calves is not yet known, but congenital malformations may be expected based on experience with Schmallenberg virus (SBV).





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3. Situation in Switzerland

Helen Huber, a veterinarian and technical specialist at RGS/SBS in Zurich, presented the evolution of the Shamonda virus outbreak in Switzerland.

The first reports from the field emerged during the second week of July. Surveys targeting farmers and veterinarians were subsequently launched towards the end of the month.

On 3 August, press releases from the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut (FLI) in Germany and the Institute of Virology and Immunology (IVI) in Switzerland announced the detection of the same new virus.

On 6 August, the virus was detected for the first time in several aborted bovine fetuses, three weeks after the first virus-positive blood samples had been collected.

On 25 August, the virus was detected for the first time in a horse presenting with neurological signs. By that date, 101 farms across 21 cantons had already been affected.

To date, more than 920 samples from 630 farms across 22 cantons have been examined, with 198 individual animals from 145 farms testing positive by PCR. Of these, around 40 positive results were associated with bovine abortions. Eight horses have so far tested positive for SHAV-EU1, while the virus has not yet been detected in sheep or goats in Switzerland. However, the speaker noted that only a small number of samples from small ruminants have been tested (fewer than 20).

SHAV-EU2 has not yet been detected in Switzerland. The main wave of infection appears to be largely over, with the proportion of laboratory samples testing positive decreasing each day.

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