

Media and communication engagement in emergency management

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CONTEXT & MANDATE: THE ONE HEALTH APPROACH

WHAT IS DG SANTE? HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE?

The Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) is the European Commission's department responsible for EU policy on health and food safety. It ensures the safety of the food chain from the farm to your plate whilst protecting animal welfare, and animal and plant health.

DG SANTE develops and implements policies that safeguard public health, ensure high-quality standards, and maintain consumer confidence across all Member States.

ONE HEALTH PHILOSOPHY

DG SANTE embraces the 'One Health' concept, recognising that human health, animal health, and environmental health are interconnected and interdependent. This integrated approach ensures that risks are managed holistically.

By linking food safety, animal welfare, animal health, and plant health, DG SANTE addresses emerging challenges such as zoonotic diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and climate-related threats to food security.

ANIMAL HEALTH: DISEASE PREVENTION & CONTROL

PROTECTING LIVESTOCK, POULTRY & AQUACULTURE

DG SANTE implements comprehensive animal health policies designed to prevent, detect, and control transmissible diseases affecting livestock, poultry, and aquaculture species. The Animal Health Law provides a unified framework for disease surveillance, early warning systems, and rapid response mechanisms.

Through coordinated programmes, DG SANTE supports Member States in eradicating major animal diseases, maintaining disease-free status, and ensuring safe movement of live animals within the internal market. These measures protect both animal populations and public health, as many animal diseases pose zoonotic risks.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS & TRADE SAFETY

EU rules ensure that imports of live animals and animal products meet EU health standards, working closely with international organisations such as the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH). This protects the EU market whilst facilitating legitimate trade and meeting international obligations under WTO agreements. member states implement these rules at their borders



TOOLS IN CASE OF CRISIS



LINES FOR THE MEDIA

DG SANTE liaises with the Spokesperson Service (SPP)
Constant update of LTTs



DEBRIEFING OF JOURNALISTS

Important to relay the Commission's line in Member States affected by the crisis



SOCIAL MEDIA

Main DG SANTE channels: X (over 87k followers) LinkedIn (over 31k followers) shared Instagram with the Agencies (over 24k followers)
FMD example on LinkedIn:
<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7437857268567810048>



OTHER TOOLS

Website
Newsletter

SCIENCE & RISK-BASED DECISION MAKING

KEY ROLE OF EFSA

DG SANTE works closely with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), which provides independent scientific advice and risk assessments on all matters related to food and feed safety, animal health and welfare, plant health, and nutrition.

This partnership ensures that EU policies are firmly grounded in the latest scientific evidence. EFSA's scientific panels evaluate risks from biological and chemical hazards, assess new technologies and products, and provide opinions that inform DG SANTE's risk management decisions.

EFSA's expertise and input can be triggered by the Commission.

Example of Greece / Sheep and goat pox

EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY

The EU's approach to food safety and health protection relies on rigorous risk analysis comprising three components: risk assessment (conducted by EFSA), risk management (by DG SANTE and Member States), and risk communication (engaging stakeholders and the public).

This evidence-based framework allows proportionate, science-driven responses to emerging challenges whilst maintaining the precautionary principle when scientific uncertainty exists regarding potential risks to health.

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT OF THE COMMISSION

1

AGRI Councils

Animal health is often the subject of discussion

6 times in 2025

Topics covered: ASF, FMD, HPAI, vaccination

2

European Parliament

54 Parliamentary Questions in 2024-25

16 PQs so far in 2026

3

Highlight in 2026 : 10th anniversary of AHL