COMMISSION DECISION

of 26 July 1999

concerning the importation of sheep and goats from Bulgaria and amending Commission Decision 97/232/EC

(notified under document number C(1999) 2433)

(Text with EEA relevance)

(1999/541/EC)

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Council Directive 72/462/EEC of 12 December 1972 on health and veterinary inspection problems upon importation of bovine, ovine and caprine animals and swine, fresh meat products from third countries [1], as last amended by Directive 97/79/EC [2] and in particular Articles 3, 6 and 7 thereof,

(1) Whereas Council Directive 91/68/EEC [3], as last amended by the Act of Accession for Austria, Finland and Sweden, lays down animal health conditions governing intra-community trade in ovine and caprine animals;

(2) Whereas Commission Decision 93/198/EEC [4], as last amended by Decision 97/231/EC [5], lays down the animal health conditions and veterinary certification for imports of domestic ovine and caprine animals;

(3) Whereas Commission Decision 97/232/EC [6] draws up a list of third countries from which the Member States authorise imports of sheep and goats;

(4) Whereas these lists can be amended at any time to take into account new information or new situations;

(5) Whereas, following a recent Commission veterinary mission, it appears that the Bulgarian veterinary services control satisfactorily the whole country;

(6) Whereas no cases of sheep pox have been recorded in Bulgaria since September 1996;

(7) Whereas the country has been free from foot and mouth disease for the last two years;

(8) Whereas it is possible to authorise the imports of domestic ovine and caprine animals for immediate slaughter without risk of spreading these diseases;

(9) Whereas it is considered necessary to keep the restriction at the import of live ovine and caprine animals for the twenty-kilometre-wide corridor along the border with Turkey;

(10) Whereas Decision 97/232/EC should be amended accordingly;

(11) Whereas the measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Standing Veterinary Committee,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Member States shall authorise the imports from Bulgaria of domestic ovine and caprine animals for immediate slaughter.

Article 2

Annex to Decision 97/232/EC is amended as follows:

In part 2 the words 'subject to temporary suspension of approval due to animal health situation' are replaced by the words 'excluding the twenty-kilometre-wide zone of the provinces of Bourgas, Jambol, Sliven, Starazagora, Hasskovo and Kardjali along the border with Turkey.

The animals described in the certificate required by Commission Decision 93/198/EEC must be subjected to:

— a period of 14 days pre-export quarantine in premises officially approved by the central competent authorities of the exporting country and which are under control of an official veterinarian and supervised in such a way that direct or indirect contact between the animals to be exported and other cloven hoofed animals is avoided and

[1] OJ L 302, 31.12.1972, p. 28.
[2] OJ L 24, 30.1.1998, p. 31.
[3] OJ L 46, 19.2.1991, p. 19.
[4] OJ L 86, 6.4.1993, p. 34.
[5] OJ L 93, 8.4.1997, p. 22.
[6] OJ L 93, 8.4.1997, p. 43.

— be subjected to a serological test for foot and mouth disease antibodies with negative results, to be carried out not before eight days after entry into isolation.'

Article 3

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels, 26 July 1999.

For the Commission

Franz FISCHLER

Member of the Commission