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COVER NOTE

From:	Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Ms Martine DEPREZ, Director
date of receipt:	27 March 2026
To:	Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union
No. Cion doc.:	C(2026) 900 final
Subject:	COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) .../... amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 as regards infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1 – 24), infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus and contagious equine metritis (Taylorella equigenitalis)

Delegations will find attached document C(2026) 900 final.

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EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Brussels, 27.3.2026
C(2026) 900 final

COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) …/...

of 27.3.2026

amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 as regards infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1 – 24), infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus and contagious equine metritis (*Taylorella equigenitalis*)

(Text with EEA relevance)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. CONTEXT OF THE DELEGATED ACT

Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health ('Animal Health Law')[1] lays down rules for the prevention and control of diseases, which are transmissible to animals or humans, including rules for the registration and approval of germinal product establishments, and for the traceability and animal health requirements for movements of consignments of germinal products within the Union.

The Commission adopted Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 of 17 December 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the approval of germinal product establishments and the traceability and animal health requirements for movements within the Union of germinal products of certain kept terrestrial animals[2].

Articles 16 and 18 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 provide that centre veterinarians and team veterinarians are to ensure that donor animals show neither symptoms nor clinical signs of any category D diseases and that none of the category D diseases relevant for bovine, porcine, ovine or caprine animals has been reported in the establishment of origin, quarantine accommodation or semen collection centre for a period of at least 30 days prior to the date of collection of germinal products. Those requirements concern also infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus. Recommendations of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) do not provide, for those two diseases, the requirement of not being reported for a period of at least 30 days prior to the date of collection of germinal products.

Infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus are two very similar diseases from an epidemiological point of view, and they concern the same listed species. Both are vector-borne diseases with specific frequent testing requirements in the event that the diseases are reported during a period of at least 60 days prior to and during collection of the semen, oocytes or embryos in a Member State or zone thereof. Testing of semen donor animals of bovine, ovine and caprine species at semen collection centres for category D diseases other than infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus is mostly carried out on an annual basis, while testing for infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus, if reported in a Member State or zone thereof, should be carried out at least every 7 or 28 days in the case an agent identification test is used, or in the period between 28 and 60 days from the date of each collection of the semen in the case a serological test is used. This fact, and the need to align the Union requirements to the WOAH recommendations, justify a different approach for those two diseases compared to other category D diseases to be introduced in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686. Therefore, the requirement of no reported case of infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) or infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus in the establishment of origin, quarantine accommodation and semen collection centre for a period of at least 30 days prior to the date of collection of germinal products should be deleted, and Articles 16 and 18 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 will be amended accordingly.

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1 OJ L 84, 31.3.2016, p. 1.

2 OJ L 174, 3.6.2020, p. 1.

Article 38 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 lays down the animal health requirements for movements to other Member States of germinal products of animals of the families *Camelidae* and *Cervidae,* including requirements related to infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorragic disease virus. Those requirements will be aligned to the requirements for donor bovine, ovine and caprine animals as laid down in amended Article 16 of and Annex II, Part 5, Chapter II to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686, as amended by this Delegated Regulation.

Part 4 of Annex II to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 lays down additional animal health requirements for equine donor animals. In accordance with point 1(a)(iii) of Chapter I and point 2(c) of Chapter II of Part 4 of that Annex, donor equine animals should be subjected to a test for contagious equine metritis (*Taylorella equigenitalis*). In accordance with the Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals of the WOAH, Chapter 3.6.2 on Contagious Equine Metritis (May 2022 version), for Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) testing it is not required to use transport medium to convey swabs to the laboratory and such swabs for PCR should be tested no more than 7 days after sampling. Therefore, Part 4 of Annex II to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 will be amended by deleting the obligation of using a transport medium from the methodology for PCR testing for contagious equine metritis (*Taylorella equigenitalis*).

Chapters II and III of Part 5 of Annex II to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 lay down requirements as regards infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus. The requirements for those diseases will be amended taking account of the recategorisation from a category C+D+E disease to a category D+E disease of infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24), as laid down in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/169[3] amending Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882[4].

2. CONSULTATIONS PRIOR TO THE ADOPTION OF THE ACT

The Expert Group on Animal Health (E00930) meetings for the purpose of this Delegated Regulation took place on 30 September and 4 November 2025.

The draft Delegated Regulation was also made available to the European Parliament and the Council. No comments were received from the European Parliament and the Council.

Several other exchanges and meetings took place with stakeholders, as well as with competent authorities of Member States where relevant drivers and elements were discussed regarding the purpose and content of the draft delegated act.

3. LEGAL ELEMENTS OF THE DELEGATED ACT

This Delegated Regulation is to be adopted within the framework of Regulation (EU) 2016/429, and in particular pursuant to Articles 160(1) and 164(2) thereof.

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[3] Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/169 of 26 January 2026 amending the Annex to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882 concerning the categorisation of infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) as a listed disease (OJ L, 2026/169, 27.1.2026, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2026/169/oj).

[4] Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882 of 3 December 2018 on the application of certain disease prevention and control rules to categories of listed diseases and establishing a list of species and groups of species posing a considerable risk for the spread of those listed diseases (OJ L 308, 4.12.2018, p. 21, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2018/1882/oj).

COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) …/...

of 27.3.2026

amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 as regards infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1 – 24), infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus and contagious equine metritis (*Taylorella equigenitalis*)

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health ('Animal Health Law')[1], and in particular Articles 160(1) and 164(2) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Regulation (EU) 2016/429 lays down rules for the prevention and control of animal diseases which are transmissible to animals or humans, including rules for the registration and approval of germinal product establishments, and for the traceability and animal health requirements for movements of consignments of germinal products within the Union.

(2) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686[2] was adopted within the framework of Regulation (EU) 2016/429, and lays down supplementing rules for the approval of germinal product establishments, record keeping and traceability of germinal products, as well as animal health and certification requirements for movements within the Union of germinal products of certain kept terrestrial animals.

(3) Articles 16 and 18 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 provide that centre veterinarians and team veterinarians are to ensure that donor animals show neither symptoms nor clinical signs of any category D diseases and that none of the category D diseases relevant for bovine, porcine, ovine or caprine animals has been reported in the establishment of origin, quarantine accommodation or semen collection centre for a period of at least 30 days prior to the date of collection of germinal products. Those requirements concern also infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus. Recommendations of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) do not provide, for those two diseases, the requirement of not being reported for a period of at least 30 days prior to the date of collection of germinal products.

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1 OJ L 84, 31.3.2016, p.1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/429/2019-12-14.

2 Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 of 17 December 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the approval of germinal product establishments and the traceability and animal health requirements for movements within the Union of germinal products of certain kept terrestrial animals (OJ L 174, 3.6.2020, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2020/686/2023-04-10).

(4) Infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus are two very similar diseases from an epidemiological point of view, and they concern the same listed species. Both are vector-borne diseases with specific frequent testing requirements in the event that the diseases are reported during a period of at least 60 days prior to and during collection of the semen, oocytes or embryos in a Member State or zone thereof. Testing of semen donor animals of bovine, ovine and caprine species at semen collection centres for category D diseases other than infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus is mostly carried out at annual basis, while testing for infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus, if reported in a Member State or zone thereof, should be carried out at least every 7 or 28 days in the case an agent identification test is used, or in the period between 28 and 60 days from the date of each collection of the semen in the case a serological test is used. This fact, and the need to align the Union requirements to the WOAH recommendations, justify a different approach for those two diseases compared to other category D diseases to be introduced in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686. Therefore, the requirement of no reported case of infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) or infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus in the establishment of origin, quarantine accommodation and semen collection centre for a period of at least 30 days prior to the date of collection of germinal products should be deleted and Articles 16 and 18 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 should be amended accordingly.

(5) In addition, the Annex to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882[3], as recently amended by Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/169[4], re-categories infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) as a category D+E disease, when it had previously been categorised as a category C+D+E disease. That amendment to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882 applies from 15 July 2026. As a consequence of such re-categorisation, the rules for infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) relating to official disease-free status or to eradication programmes, including the requirements for movements of germinal products when entering into a disease-free Member State or zone thereof or into a Member State or zone thereof subjected to an eradication programme laid down in Part II, Chapter 2, Section 4, of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689[5] and in Annex V, Part II, thereto, were amended by Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2026/xx [PLAN/1924/2025][6]. Those amendments to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 apply from 15 July 2026. Therefore, the requirements laid down in those provisions of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 related to the official disease-free status of a

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3 Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882 of 3 December 2018 on the application of certain disease prevention and control rules to categories of listed diseases and establishing a list of species and groups of species posing a considerable risk for the spread of those listed diseases (OJ L 308, 4.12.2018, p. 21, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2018/1882/oj).

4 Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/169 of 26 January 2026 amending the Annex to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882 concerning the categorisation of infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) as a listed disease (OJ L, 2026/169, 27.1.2026, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2026/169/oj).

5 Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 of 17 December 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards rules for surveillance, eradication programmes, and disease-free status for certain listed and emerging diseases (OJ L 174, 3.6.2020, p. 211, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2020/689/oj).

6 Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2026/xx of xx xxx 2026 amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 as regards the infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1 – 24) eradication programmes and disease-free status (OJ L xx, xx.xx.2026, p. xx, ELI: xxx [PLAN/1924/2025]; C(2026)903)

Member State or zone thereof or to carrying out an eradication programme for infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) cease to apply from 15 July 2026. Accordingly, Annex II, Part 5, Chapter II, to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 should be amended by deleting the references to a disease-free status and to an eradication programme for that disease.

(6) Article 38 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 lays down the animal health requirements for movements to other Member States of germinal products of animals of the families *Camelidae* and *Cervidae,* including requirements related to infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24). Those requirements should be aligned with the requirements for donor bovine, ovine and caprine animals laid down in Article 16 of and Annex II, Part 5, Chapter II, to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686, as amended by this Delegated Regulation.

(7) Annex II, Part 4, to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 lays down additional animal health requirements for equine donor animals. In accordance with point 1(a)(iii) of Chapter I and point 2(c) of Chapter II of Part 4 of that Annex, donor equine animals must be subjected to a test for contagious equine metritis (*Taylorella equigenitalis*). In accordance with the Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals of the WOAH, Chapter 3.6.2 on Contagious Equine Metritis (May 2022 version), for Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) testing it is not required to use transport medium to convey swabs to the laboratory and such swabs for PCR are to be tested no more than 7 days after sampling. Therefore, Part 4 of Annex II to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 should be amended by deleting the obligation to use a transport medium from the methodology for PCR testing for contagious equine metritis (*Taylorella equigenitalis*).

(8) Annex II, Part 5, Chapters II and III, to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 lay down requirements as regards infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with the epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus. The requirements for those diseases should be amended taking account of the re-categorisation from a category C+D+E disease to a category D+E disease of infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) in the Annex to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882.

(9) As the amendments made to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882 by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/169 concerning the re-categorisation of infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) as a category D+E disease apply from 15 July 2026, this Delegated Regulation should also apply from that date.

(10) Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 should, therefore, be amended accordingly,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 is amended as follows:

(1) Article 16 is amended as follows:

(a) point (d)(ii) is replaced by the following:

‘(ii) they have been kept in establishments where no category D diseases relevant for those animals, except infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus, have been reported;’;

(b) point (e) is replaced by the following:

‘(e) on the day of collection of the semen, oocytes or embryos, they have not shown any symptoms or clinical signs of any of the following:

(i) the category D diseases referred to in point (d)(ii);

(ii) infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24);

(iii) infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus;

(iv) the emerging diseases referred to in Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2016/429;’;

(2) Article 18 is amended as follows:

(a) point (a) is replaced by the following:

‘(a) on the day of their admission to a semen collection centre, they have not shown any symptoms or clinical signs of any of the following:

(i) the category D diseases referred to in Article 16, point (d)(ii);

(ii) infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24);

(iii) infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus;

(iv) the emerging diseases referred to in Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2016/429;’;

(b) point (b)(i) is replaced by the following:

‘(i) none of the category D diseases relevant for the bovine, porcine, ovine or caprine animals, except infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus, has been reported for a period of at least the preceding 30 days;’;

(c) point (c)(i) is replaced by the following:

‘(i) during a period which comprises at least 30 days prior to date of collection and at least 30 days following the date of collection of the semen or, in the case of fresh semen, until the date of dispatch of the consignment of semen, none of the category D diseases relevant for bovine, porcine, ovine, caprine or equine animals, except infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus, has been reported;’;

(3) Article 38 is amended as follows:

(a) point (g) is deleted;

(b) point (k) is replaced by the following:

‘(k) fulfil the animal health requirements as regards infection with bluetongue virus (serotypes 1-24) and infection with epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus laid down in Chapters II and III of Part 5 of Annex II;’;

(4) Annex II is amended in accordance with the Annex to this Regulation.

Article 2

This Regulation shall enter into force on the seventh day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply from 15 July 2026.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels, 27.3.2026

For the Commission
The President
Ursula VON DER LEYEN