

21 September 2026

11:00-16:00

MINUTES - Agreed on 1st October 2026

Location: Web conference

Attendees:

o **Working Group Members:**

Anette BOKLUND, Guido DI DONATO, Simon GUBBINS, Laurent GUILLIER, Arjan STAGEMAN

o **Hearing Experts¹**

Not Applicable

o **Applicants participating in a technical hearing²:**

Not Applicable

o **European Commission and/or Member States representatives:**

Not Applicable

o **EFSA:**

BIOHAW Unit: Alessandro BROGLIA, Marika VITALI, Natisha VATWANI

o **Others:**

Not applicable

I. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. No apologies were received.

II. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

III. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence³ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management⁴, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled out by the Working Group members invited to the present meeting and the preparatory meetings listed under agenda item "Preparatory meeting/s with Risk Assessment". No conflicts of interest related to the issues discussed in these meetings have been identified during the screening process, and no interests were declared orally by the Working Group members at the beginning of these meetings.

IV. Scientific topic(s) for discussion

4.1 RVF infection in animals in the restricted zone

The WG discussed the spatial transmission model for RVFV, including model assumptions, input data, detection and surveillance assumptions, transmission uncertainty and control measures. The

¹ As defined in Article 34 of the document "Implementing Rule of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority laying down the rules on the selection, appointment and operations of the Scientific Committee, Scientific Panels and of their Working Groups":

<https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/paneloperation.pdf>

² As defined in the "EFSA's Catalogue of support initiatives during the life cycle of applications for regulated products":

<https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/sp.efsa.2021.EN-6472>

³ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf

⁴ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf



WG agreed to include cattle, buffalo, sheep and goats in the assessment and to further refine the modelling of undetected infection and detection. Buffalo data will be incorporated into the model, and farm production type will be differentiated where data allow.

4.2 Selection of products/matrices to be considered in the mandate

The WG discussed a staged approach for selecting products for further assessment, considering evidence of contamination with infectious RfV and the existence of biologically plausible pathways leading to exposure of susceptible animals. Product and pathway exclusions will be documented and reflected in the interpretation of the mandate.

4.3 Pathways of spread outside the restricted zone

Relevant intended-use and exposure pathways were discussed for the products in scope. The assessment will focus on the probability that a susceptible animal outside the restricted zone becomes infected following exposure to a moved product; onward transmission is considered out of the scope, as well as vector infection through contact with products, and will not be included in the assessment.

4.4 RfV in products and mitigating treatments

The WG reviewed available evidence on RfV occurrence and inactivation in products and discussed the assessment of heat, pH, storage and other treatments. Treatment efficacy will be evaluated considering initial contamination, analytical detection limits, achievable virus reduction and associated uncertainty. The WG discussed which mitigating measures, other than the ones included in Annex VII of the AHL should be included, and was agreed to prioritize practicable measures already applied in an operational system.

4.5 Protocol review

The WG reviewed the draft protocol and discussed the scope and overall assessment framework. The Terms of Reference were translated into assessment questions and sub-questions and further refined during the discussion. The approach will follow a modular structure linking undetected infection in source animals, infectious virus in products, relevant pathways and exposure of susceptible animals, and the effects of mitigation measures. The WG agreed to continue the protocol review.

V. Planning, tasks and deadlines

5.1 Tasks and deadlines

Tasks were allocated to EFSA staff and WG experts.

VI. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 5 October 2026 via web conference.
