

Emergency disease control of CCHF outbreak in Herat

CCHF (Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever) is a disease which can be fatal in humans. The disease is spread through contact with ticks or infected animals, including cattle, sheep, and goats. Clinical symptoms are rare in infected mammals, but commonly severe in infected humans, with a 30% mortality rate.

Ticks have been identified as the main vectors of the disease, with animals as carriers. So tick control is an effective measure to lower prevalence of CCHF in humans. Ticks can be eliminated in two ways: spraying the stables where the animals are kept, and injecting animals using Ivermectin.

Human cases of CCHF have been recently reported in Herat, a province that suffered three previous outbreaks in the 1970s, 2000 and 2006. As at 8th August 2012, there have been 9 clinical cases, including one human fatality.

In order to limit the spread of the disease in Herat, a team of local paravets, DCA extension staff and the Provincial Veterinary Officer will visit three villages, which are at the centre of the outbreak. The paravets will spray the livestock stables to rid them of ticks and inject animals to reduce the number of ticks they are harboring. The DCA extension staff will provide the farmers with information on CCHF, and the PVO will provide advice and supervise the activities.

This emergency disease control project is a cooperation between GDAH&P (General Directorate of Animal Health and Production of Afghanistan), AHDP (Animal Health Development Programme), and DCA-VET, and is funded by the European Union.