

France Reports Second Rabies Case

Infected dog known to have had contact with unvaccinated cat.

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France reported last Thursday its second canine rabies case of 2008, once again attributing the case to the illegal movement of animals into France from other countries.

In the new case, a female dog that was born in December 2007 in Gambia traveled from Gambia to Belgium on April 7, then was transported to France a week later. Despite a rabies vaccination on March 15 and a certificate of good health signed April 5, the dog was in poor condition when she arrived in France, according to the French Ministry of Agriculture.

She was examined by three veterinary clinics, with the third clinic suspecting rabies due to nervous signs.

The dog died — she was not euthanized — on April 21; a laboratory examination of her head confirmed rabies.

The only other animal known to have had contact with the dog was the dog owner's 18-year-old cat. The cat was not vaccinated against rabies, did not have contact with other animals and was scheduled to be euthanized April 25.

France has reported that this rabies case is not epidemiologically linked to the case of canine rabies it reported in February 2008. Rabies is a reportable disease, meaning countries must report any outbreaks to other countries.

The strain identified in the new case was similar to those in Guinea and Sierra Leone, suggesting a Gambian origin of the strain, French authorities say.