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Rapid Appraisal Technique for Assessing the Economic Impact of a Notifiable Disease Outbreak

This technique is suitable for quickly assessing the likely scale of economic impact of an outbreak of a disease which can result in the temporary closure of export markets for host products. Note that it is only suitable for assessing the economic impact of a disease outbreak – not the environmental or social impacts. For example, the 2001 F&M outbreak resulted in the temporary closure not just of export markets, but also of the countryside, resulting in a substantial social impact.

Question 1: How important are export markets as a proportion of total domestic production?

Small (eg < 25%) = Green; Medium (eg > 25%, < 50%) = Amber; Large (eg > 50%) = Red

The rationale for this question is to get a quick assessment of the potential scale of the disruption to the normal patterns of production and sale of host products arising from the export ban.

Note that the impact of the outbreak on export markets will also depend on whether health certificates only exclude exports from restricted areas, and therefore allow exports to continue from non-restricted areas. Any such flexibility reduces the importance of an outbreak.

Question 2: How big is the export market compared with the import market for host products?

Small (eg < 50%) = Green; Medium (eg > 50%, < 100%) = Amber; Large (eg > 100%) = Red

The rationale for this question is to get a quick assessment of the potential for import substitution to provide an outlet for banned exports of host products.

Note that achieving import substitution will typically require some price discount, so this question is aimed at indicating the potential size of such a discount required for the domestic market to substitute banned exports for imports.

Note also that the scale of answers to Questions 1 and 2 are likely to be positively correlated, but they attempt to differentiate quantity and price aspects of the impact respectively.

Question 3: To what extent is domestic demand for host products likely to be negatively affected?

Small (eg < 25%) = Green; Medium (eg > 25%, < 50%) = Amber; Large (eg > 50%) = Red

The rationale for this question is to get a quick assessment of whether negative effects on domestic consumer demand for host products are likely because of the outbreak.

Note that such negative effects will typically relate to the perceived food safety implications of the outbreak, and will require price discounts not just to substitute in banned exports but also to maintain normal domestic sales.

Rob Fraser

University of Kent

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