A message from the Emerging & Endemic Disease Alert System (EEDAS)

Shamonda virus detected in cattle in Great Britain



Situation

In October 2026, Shamonda virus (SHAV) was detected in cattle at two dairy farms, one located in Powys, Wales and one in Shropshire, England, after samples were collected and tested at APHA laboratories in Weybridge. Affected cattle presented with clinical signs consistent with those described in acute cases in Europe.

Background

During 2026, SHAV has been detected in cattle, sheep, goats, alpacas and horses in several European countries. It is an orthobunyavirus of the Simbu serogroup and is closely related to Schmallenberg virus (SBV). SHAV is believed to be transmitted by Culicoides biting midges, the same vector responsible for transmission of Schmallenberg Virus (SBV) and bluetongue virus.

Clinical presentation

Based on descriptions of disease in other countries, acute disease has predominantly been described in adult dairy cattle and may affect multiple animals within a herd over a short period. Clinical signs may include:

- Reduced rumination
- Lethargy
- General weakness
- Inappetence
- Sudden reduction in milk yield
- Transient fever
- Diarrhoea/scour
- Reproductive issues: premature birth or pregnancy loss, congenital defects.
- Less commonly: Nasal discharge, eye inflammation/ cloudiness, mouth ulcers

No acute disease has been observed in sheep or goats to date.

A small number of horses have been diagnosed in other European countries like Germany and Switzerland showing the following clinical signs:

- Neurological abnormalities: Ataxia (wobbly or uncoordinated movement)
- Fever
- Behavioural and mental changes: severe drowsiness, unusual anxiety
- Muscular and reflex issues: muscle tremors, over-sensitivity to environmental stimuli, seizure-like episodes.

If you suspect a case in your animal/s please get in touch and your vet will discuss this with the APHA. This is a NON-NOTIFIABLE disease in England currently but APHA may provide free testing from October 2026- May 2027 on calves, lambs, and kids with certain congenital abnormalities.

There is currently no licensed vaccine, although officials say no additional disease-control measures are required.

Please note that: The clinical presentations and signs associated with SHAV are not specific to the virus. Clinical signs may overlap with a number of other diseases, some notifiable, including bluetongue. Suspicion of notifiable disease must be reported. In England, this is by calling 03000 200 301. In Wales contact 0300 303 8268 and in Scotland call 03000 600 704.

Public health: There is no evidence that SHAV poses a food safety risk. UKHSA has undertaken a rapid risk assessment, and this considers SHAV to present a very low risk to the general population in the UK at the current time. A full assessment is being undertaken by the Human Animal Infection and Risk Surveillance (HAIRS) group.

Further information available is available on the gov.uk website.