



EPIZONE

# PROGRAMME

2. – 4. September 2026 in the  
House of Sports in Bern,  
Switzerland

Hosted by



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
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Institut für Virologie und Immunologie

<sup>b</sup>  
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# Programme

## EPIZONE Day 1 – Wednesday, 2 September 2026

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 13:30 – 14:00 | <i>Doors Opening &amp; Poster Mounting</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 14:00 – 15:15 | <p><b>Plenary Session 1 – Current Disease Challenges</b><br/>Location: Stadion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>— Special session: Shamonda virus emergence in Switzerland (Jakub Kubacki, Institute of Virology and Immunology IVI)</li><li>— Hepatitis E (Wim van der Poel, Wageningen University and Research) &amp; recognition of his longtime contribution to EPIZONE</li></ul> |                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 15:15 – 15:30 | <p><b>Poster Slam – Round 1</b><br/>Location: Stadion</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 15:30 – 16:00 | <i>Poster Viewing &amp; Coffee Break</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 16:00 – 17:30 | <p><b>Parallel Session 1.1 – One Health and Zoonoses</b><br/>Location: Stadion</p> <p><i>contents on the following page</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p><b>Parallel Session 1.2 – Addressing Current Challenges (HPAI, BTV, LSD, FMD, PPR, etc.)</b><br/>Location: Olympia</p> <p><i>contents on the following page</i></p> |
| 17:30 – 19:00 | <p><b>Poster Session &amp; Welcome reception</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                        |

## **Parallel Session 1.1 – One Health and Zoonoses**

- Whole-Genome and Antigenic Characterization of Swine Influenza A Viruses in Italy Reveals Extensive Reassortment, Lineage Diversification, and Antigenic Divergence (Ana Moreno)
- A bovine H5N1 virus efficiently replicates in differentiated human nasal epithelial cells (Etori Aguiar Moreira)
- Beyond H5N1: Influenza A virus infection in bovine udder organoids (Henrik Fritsch)
- Tissue Distribution of Coronaviruses in Bats from Great Britain (Saumya S Thomas)
- High-Resolution Genomic Analysis of SARS-CoV-2 Transmission and Evolution in Danish Mink Farms (Thomas Bruun Rasmussen)
- INTEGRATED ONE HEALTH SURVEILLANCE REVEALS WEST NILE VIRUS EXPANSION BEYOND ENDEMIC AREAS IN FRANCE (Camille Migné)
- Surveillance of West Nile and Usutu virus in birds in Luxembourg for animal and public health (Chantal Snoeck)

## **Parallel Session 1.2 – Addressing Current Challenges (HPAI, BTV, LSD, FMD, PPR, etc.)**

- New FMDV outbreaks in Europe since the beginning of 2026 (Aurore Romey)
- Lumpy Skin Disease in Italy: From First Introduction in 2025 to Re-emergence in Sardinia in 2026 (Gaia Muroi)
- Immune response to lumpy skin disease virus infection and vaccination measured with in house IgM and IgG ELISAs and IGRA: Insights into isotype switching and cell mediated immunity (Nina Kresic)
- Comparative Evaluation of Disease Progression and Host Transcriptomic Responses Following Infection with Romania 2024 and Ivory Coast '89 PPRV Strains (José Manuel Rojas)
- Detection of a raccoon dog and fox amovoparvovirus (variant) in domestic dogs in Serbia (Tamaš Petrović)
- Investigating the virulence change from low to high pathogenicity in avian influenza viruses (Kelly J Roper)
- Evidence for Shedding of Infectious BTV-3 in Semen of Naturally Infected Bulls (Martin Ashby)

## EPIZONE Day 2 – Thursday, 3 September 2026

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|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 08:30 – 10:00 | <p><b>Plenary Session 2 – Strengthen Preparedness</b><br/>Location: Stadion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Crisis preparedness from a One Health perspective (Jakob Zinsstag, Swiss TPH)</li> <li>— Mobile labs and their potential for veterinary response (Sophie Duraffour, Mobile Laboratory and Outbreak Preparedness and Response OPR)</li> <li>— Handling several outbreaks at once: lessons from Greece (Konstantia Tasioudi, Department of Molecular Diagnostics, Veterinary Center of Athens)</li> <li>— Panel discussion: how can we improve preparedness and outbreak response?</li> </ul> |
| 10:00 – 10:15 | <p><b>Poster Slam – Round 2</b><br/>Location: Stadion</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 10:15 – 11:00 | <p><b>Poster Session</b><br/><b>&amp; Coffee Break</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 11:00 – 12:30 | <div> <div data-bbox="419 1111 895 1615"> <p><b>Parallel Session 2.1 – Diagnostic Tools (Focus on Current Challenges with Re-emerging Diseases)</b><br/>Location: Stadion</p> <p><i>contents on the following page</i></p> </div> <div data-bbox="895 1111 1388 1615"> <p><b>Parallel Session 2.2 – African Swine Fever</b><br/>Location: Olympia</p> <p><i>contents on the following page</i></p> </div> </div>                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

## **Parallel Session 2.1 – Diagnostic Tools (Focus on Current Challenges with Re-emerging Diseases)**

- Nanopore Sequencing in Diagnostic Virology: A Swift Response to Animal Disease Outbreaks in Germany (Sten Calvelage)
- Serological approaches to investigate incursions of non-notifiable low pathogenicity avian influenza virus into UK poultry over a 10-year period (Cecilia Di Genova)
- Detection of MERS-related coronaviruses in Danish bats using a novel RT-qPCR assay (Camille Melissa Johnston)
- Integrated Diagnostic Approaches for Foot-and-Mouth Disease Surveillance, Outbreak Response and Control (Swaantje Wenzel)
- Comparison of Mosquito-Magnet® and livestock-aspirated collection of mosquitoes: implications for modelling spread of mosquito-borne animal diseases (Armin Elbers)
- Improved whole genome sequencing technique for archived virus samples: sequencing UK's last wild-type rinderpest virus samples (Noemi Polo)

## **Parallel Session 2.2 – African Swine Fever**

- Genomic and biological characterization of a genetically distinct African swine fever virus genotype II variant detected in Spain (Carmina Gallardo)
- Passive surveillance efficiency for African Swine Fever detection in wild boar in Italy. (Clara Montagnin)
- African swine fever early detection kinetics in boar semen following oronasal exposure to high and low virulent ASFV strains (Kalhari Goonewardene)
- ASF vaccine IVI (Kemal Mehinagic)
- A minimal infectious dose of African swine fever virus induces lethal disease with implications for environmental persistence and molecular surveillance (LLilianne Ganges)
- African swine fever virus hijacks the host cell cytoskeleton to induce tunneling nanotube-like projections: a comparative study of primary target cells and ASFV isolates (Brecht Driesbeke)

## EPIZONE Day 2 – Thursday, 3 September 2026

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| <b>13:30 – 14:30</b>                                                                                            | <b>Plenary Session 3 – Advancing Research</b><br>Location: Stadion <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>— Beyond animal testing: will organ technologies aid vaccine development? (Dirk Werling, Royal Veterinary College, University of London)</li><li>— How is AI shaping global health? (Filipa Matos Baptista, Siemens Healthineers)</li></ul>                    |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>14:30 – 14:45</b>                                                                                            | <b>Poster Slam – Round 3</b><br>Location: Stadion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>14:45 – 15:45</b>                                                                                            | <b>Poster Session</b><br><b>&amp; Coffee Break</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>15:45 – 17:00</b>                                                                                            | <table><tr><td data-bbox="416 1021 895 1435"><b>Parallel Session 3.1 – Vaccine Development</b><br/>Location: Stadion<br/><i>contents on the following page</i></td><td data-bbox="895 1021 1394 1435"><b>Parallel Session 3.2 – Disease Surveillance, Epidemiology, Risk Analysis</b><br/>Location: Olympia<br/><i>contents on the following page</i></td></tr></table> | <b>Parallel Session 3.1 – Vaccine Development</b><br>Location: Stadion<br><i>contents on the following page</i> | <b>Parallel Session 3.2 – Disease Surveillance, Epidemiology, Risk Analysis</b><br>Location: Olympia<br><i>contents on the following page</i> |
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| <b>19:00 – 23:30</b>                                                                                            | <i>Gala Dinner with a View – Excursion onto the Gurten Mountain</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                               |

### **Parallel Session 3.1 – Vaccine Development**

- Persistence of maternal vaccine-induced immunity under field conditions against BTV-3 and exploratory evidence of heterologous immune transfer through bovine colostrum (Ilse De Leeuw)
- Production and characterization of Lv17/WB/Rie1- $\Delta$ EP153R/ $\Delta$ EP402R vaccine candidates with serially deleted MGF 300 and MGF 360 genes (Barbara Oláh)
- ASF vaccine IVI (Maksym Samoilenko)
- ASF vaccine IVI (Nolwen Husson)
- Three of the most commonly used sheep pox vaccine strains offer sufficient protection against a challenge with a highly virulent sheeppox virus strain (Wannes Philips)

### **Parallel Session 3.2 – Disease Surveillance, Epidemiology, Risk Analysis**

- Cryptic invasion and evolutionary dynamics of peste des petits ruminants virus across Europe (Arnaud Bataille)
- Serological Screening for Avian Influenza in Cattle in the Netherlands (Steffen Matthijn de Boer)
- Bluetongue Virus Serotype 3 in Switzerland: Producer Perspectives, Epidemiological Dynamics and Disease Impact (Beat Thomann)
- Genomic Surveillance and Epidemiology of West Nile and Usutu Viruses in France (Mathilde Gondard)
- Spatiotemporal and phylogenetic dynamics of Newcastle disease virus in wild birds in Catalonia, Spain: implications for reservoir dynamics and risk assessment (Kateri Bertran)
- Mapping transmission: PRRSV phylodynamics and swine movement networks in Austria (Gavrila Amadea Puspitarani)

## EPIZONE Day 3 – Friday, 4 September 2026

|                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| <b>08:30 – 10:00</b>                                                                                                                                                                  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Plenary Session 4 – Coping with Future Threats</b><br/>Location: Stadion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>— How can we control vector-borne disease? Experiences from Switzerland (Eva Veronesi, Scuola universitaria professionale della Svizzera italiana SUPSI)</li><li>— Emerging and neglected threats: the example of Hantavirus in Europe (Martin Eiden, Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut FLI)</li><li>— Updates from EUPAHW (Nathalie Vanderheijden, Coordinator of the European Partnership on Animal Health and Welfare)</li><li>— Best Abstract:<br/>«Deciphering early virus-host interactions associated with pathogenic and protective immunity against African swine fever virus» (Enrique Ezcurra Zubizarreta, IRTA-CReSA)</li></ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>10:00 – 10:30</b>                                                                                                                                                                  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Poster Session</b><br/><b>&amp; Coffee Break</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>10:30 – 12:00</b>                                                                                                                                                                  | <table><tr><td data-bbox="427 1066 895 1570"><p style="text-align: center;"><b>Parallel Session 4.1 – Vector-borne Diseases</b><br/>Location: Stadion</p><p style="text-align: center;"><i>contents on the following page</i></p></td><td data-bbox="895 1066 1380 1570"><p style="text-align: center;"><b>Parallel Session 4.2 – Pathogenesis and Virology</b><br/>Location: Olympia</p><p style="text-align: center;"><i>contents on the following page</i></p></td></tr></table>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Parallel Session 4.1 – Vector-borne Diseases</b><br/>Location: Stadion</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>contents on the following page</i></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Parallel Session 4.2 – Pathogenesis and Virology</b><br/>Location: Olympia</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>contents on the following page</i></p> |
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| <b>12:00 – 12:15</b>                                                                                                                                                                  | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Closing Ceremony</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>12:30 – 13:30</b>                                                                                                                                                                  | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Light Lunch</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                           |

## Parallel Session 4.1 – Vector-borne Diseases

- Understanding the pathogenesis of the transboundary bluetongue virus serotype 3 (BTV-3) in Europe through experimental sheep infection (Pablo Nogales-Altozano)
- Development of vaccines based on recombinant VP2 protein of Bluetongue virus and evaluation in an IFNAR-/- murine model (Thomas DESHAYES)
- Serological and molecular evidences of Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever virus (CCHFV) among animals and ticks in Israel (Elad Eliahoo)
- Wesselsbron virus infection in neonatal lambs causes severe viscerotropic hepatitis associated with neutrophil infiltration (Obdulio Garcia Nicolas)
- Characterization of Japanese Encephalitis Virus Replication Kinetics and Target Cells in Porcine PBMCs (Leticia Navarro)
- Ticks and tick-borne human and animal pathogens in high-footfall areas in Luxembourg (Judith M.Hübschen)

## Parallel Session 4.2 – Pathogenesis and Virology

- Chicken Lung Organoids as a Physiologically Relevant Model to Study Avian Influenza Infection (Rubén del Caz)
- Homologous and heterologous influenza A virus infections of bovine, porcine and human well-differentiated airway epithelial cells: virus loads and host responses (Luca Bordes)
- Host Immune Signatures Distinguish Clinically Silent Persistence from Severe Disease during Classical Swine Fever Virus Infection (LLilianne Ganges)
- The outcome of Orbivirus co-infections is influenced by the viral strains involved, cell line and timings of infection (Marc Guimera Busquets)
- Functional analysis of neurotropic porcine bastrovirus by reverse genetics (Xuanxuan Zhang)
- Pathobiology and Protective Immune Transfer Against Wesselsbron Virus in Ifnar1-/- Mice (Marta Zimoch)

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