



TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICES

The BNEVP provides support for health inspection services in two cases:

➔ **During health crisis situations**

The BNEVP may lend its support during emergency situations to field teams when **crisis management actions are implemented**. Due to limited staff numbers, the BNEVP cannot take over for field teams for a sustained period of time during a crisis. However, during the crisis management phase, it can shore up special operations for **increased flexibility and reactivity**.

➔ **Upon request by inspection services**

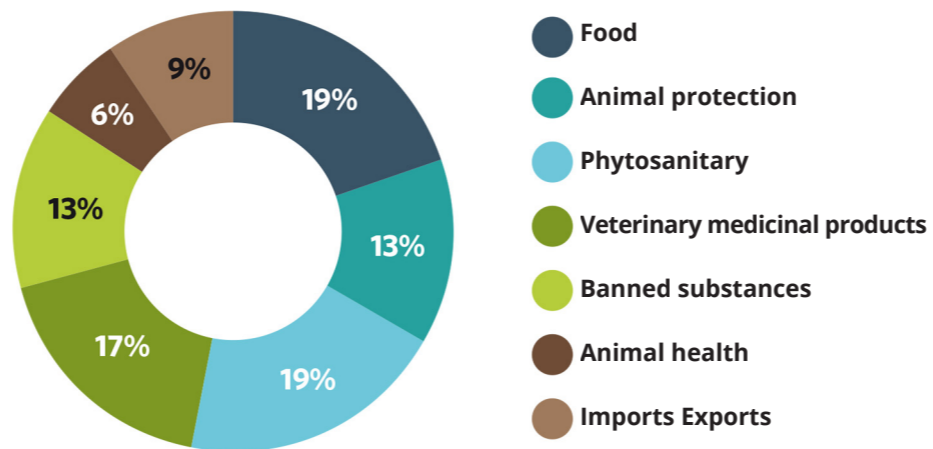
The BNEVP can help the Regional Directorates for Food, Agriculture and Forestry

(DRAAF) and Departmental Directorates for Social Cohesion and Population Protection (DDCSPP) with interventions in a specific area by **providing legal expertise to inspection services**.

Certain investigations deal with imports of foreign products in violation of an embargo due to health reasons. Others are focused on the use of raw materials limited to animal feed in products intended for human consumption.

BNEVP investigators also support DRAAF teams upon request during **inspections of phytosanitary product distributors and share their knowledge on counterfeiting** with the relevant devolved services.

At any given time, the BNEVP manages around a hundred cases. Every year, it takes on about fifty new cases, most of which deal with legal matters.



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Directorate
General
for Food

FRENCH NATIONAL VETERINARY AND PHYTOSANITARY INVESTIGATION UNIT (BNEVP)

Investigation Unit for the Directorate General for Food

The French National Veterinary and Phytosanitary Investigation Unit (BNEVP) is a department of the Directorate General for Food (DGAL), which oversees food safety, health and plant and animal production in conjunction with regional and departmental authorities.

The BNEVP can intervene anywhere in the country and is a powerful force that can provide emergency support when needed by the DGAL. Its activities are mainly focused on fighting organized crime.



The **BNEVP**, which is under the direct authority of the DGAL Director General, is based in Rungis, France, just outside Paris, and has offices in Nantes, Toulouse, Dijon and Lyon. Its officers have the authority to intervene on a **national** scope in both legal and administrative matters, enabling them to quickly investigate anywhere in France when necessary.

The BNEVP's national scope, its investigators' authority to take action and the unit's experience in understanding economic mechanisms and possible irregularities allows it to **identify violators who have developed illegal business strategies and even criminal networks.**

THE BNEVP HAS THREE TYPES OF MISSIONS



Fighting organized crime in health and plant protection products.



Carrying out national investigations.



Providing technical support for health inspection services.

The BNEVP employs around 20 officers. Depending on their specialization, investigators take on cases dealing with **health and animal protection, veterinary medicinal products, pet identification, banned substances, food hygiene and plant protection** (plant protection products trafficking, plant health).



LEGAL INVESTIGATIONS AND FIGHTING HEALTH AND PHYTOSANITARY CRIME

With regards to organized crime and within the scope of its powers, the BNEVP is responsible for:

➔ **Carrying out investigations** to identify and prove violations and refer cases to the relevant court, law enforcement or customs authorities. It can also handle cases directly based on the information provided by the Ministry's inspection services.



The BNEVP does not handle cases where violators' activities are restricted to the jurisdiction of a single devolved authority. It participates in large-scale, national and even international investigations.

➔ **Providing technical support for various authorities** (legal, law enforcement, customs) as well as relevant administrations.

Accordingly, BNEVP officers work on a daily basis **with law enforcement on cases they initiate and manage under the authority of magistrates, law enforcement officers** and customs officers. They strive to quickly and adequately respond to technical requests from gendarmes and customs officers and participate in gendarme training.

The BNEVP works closely with the **Central Office for Coordinating Environmental and Public Health Crime (OCLAESP)** and the **National Customs Judicial Service (SNDJ)**. It can provide specialized investigative services to magistrates upon their prior authorization.

The BNEVP's activities were initially focused on fighting trafficking of anabolic steroids and veterinary medicinal products, but have gradually been expanded to other areas under the DGAL's authority. The BNEVP now handles a variety of issues, including the trafficking of **dogs, horses, veterinary medicinal products, food and plant protection products**



ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATIONS UPON REQUEST OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR FOOD

When the DGAL identifies a specific health risk or suspects potential fraud or violations related to business strategies, it may ask the BNEVP to carry out a national investigation within a specific scope.

In this past, this was the case with farm milk filtration, function creep of certain veterinary medicinal products (e.g., used as anabolic substances by bodybuilders), horse trafficking, food poisoning tied to the consumption of **ground beef**, etc.

For the past several years, the BNEVP has been overseeing an investigation following recurrent reports of **fraud in parallel imports of plant protection products** (nearly 250 distributors have been inspected to date). Each investigation requires inspections of numerous businesses to identify the fraud and deter-

Certain matters, such as plant protection product counterfeiting, which concerns the entire European Union, **require joint efforts with other EU member countries. As a result, BNEVP officers regularly participate in EU-level meetings.**

mine its extent. When dealing with administrative police matters, BNEVP officers work in close collaboration with devolved services (**DDCSPP and DRAAF**).

