

# Croatia: Anthrax found in dead cattle in nature park

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Anthrax has been confirmed in dozens of cattle found dead in a nature park southeast of the Croatian capital of Zagreb, authorities said Saturday.

Authorities conducted tests on the animal carcasses after reports that the cattle had developed neurological symptoms, the Ministry of Agriculture said. It said all measures were being taken to contain the outbreak in Lonjsko Polje, a flood plain by the Sava River known for its unique environment.

The state HRT television reported that four people also have been hospitalized with skin infections. The report said 107 cattle have died in the past two weeks.

"We can say that the case is under complete control and there is no room for panic," said local public health official Inoslav Brkić,

Spores of anthrax can lie dormant in the ground until they are ingested by animals or activated when the soil is disturbed by heavy rain, flooding or drought. Outbreaks can kill a large number of animals in a short time. Infected livestock often are found dead with no illness detected.

Anthrax rarely spreads to humans and almost never is transmitted from person to person. About 95% of all human cases of anthrax result from skin contact with infected animals. It can be treated with antibiotics but can be fatal if left untreated.

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