Reviewer’s report

Title: Q fever in the Netherlands: public perceptions and behavioural responses in three different epidemiological regions: a follow-up study

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Reviewer: Renata Welc-Faleciak

Reviewer’s report:

This ms presents the interesting data on knowledge, perceived risk, feelings of anxiety and behavioral responses of the Dutch general public related to Q fever during an actual outbreak situation. It is worth to note that public knowledge, anxiety and preventive behavior increased significantly after severe outbreak of Q fever in 2009. All collected data (total of 3626 participants) was presented in series of informative tables and analyzed in view of regional differences in public perceptions and behaviors regarding Q fever. It is worth to underline that the decrease in public knowledge and preventive behavior were noted simultaneously with the decrease of media attention regarding to Q fever in Netherlands. Generally, in spite of numerous human cases of Q fever between 2007-2009, the perceived anxiety was rather low, even in the high incidence region. What is more, authors observed low level of intention to wear face mask, even if it is an effective prevention strategy. Therefore, the actual information provided by media about the risk of infection, severity of disease and specific preventive measures is crucial during future outbreaks of infectious diseases, not only zoonosis.

This study is well planned, performed, analyzed and, finally, well presented.

Minor Essential Revisions

Please correct typo (i.e. behavior instead of behaviour)

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests