Author's response to reviews

Title: Analysis of geographic distribution of HFRS in Liaoning Province between 2000 and 2005

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In respect of the reviewers' comments, we have revised our manuscript as follows:

Remark 1. How are the cases collected? Could there be any bias in the report system?

Answer: HFRS cases were first diagnosed using clinical symptoms; then blood samples were collected in the hospitals; serology was performed at the laboratory of the Liaoning CDC. There might be admission rate bias in the disease report, but this has been reduced as much as possible. (see Page 5, 1st paragraph)

Remark 2. The manuscript doesn't include data regarding the sex and age related incidence which probably could be obtained from the present figures and the census.

Answer: There should be the data in the census, but now it is unavailable for us, but we will study it in our future study.

Remark 3. Are there any seasonal or year to year variation in the incidence of HFRS in this region?

Answer: In the revised one, we have analyzed the seasonal the yearly trend, we found that there were two epidemic peaks almost every year. (see Page 8, 3rd paragraph).

Remark 4. The incidence is given at the county level. Could clusters be identified on a smaller scale?

Answer: this is also a deep analysis that we have thought to do, but the statutory report system is in the county level, so smaller scale analysis is hard for us to do, but it has been in the our study plan.

Remark 5. Is there a possibility to include additional environmental factors in the GIS analysis?

Answer: we have analyzed the difference of relative humidity and amount of forestation between the clustering areas and others, the difference is significant. (see Page 8, 4th paragraph).

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Answer: Some changes have been made in the figures, like the north arrow, scale bar, legend, etc. And we have asked a native English-speaker to check our manuscript for some English expressing and term errors.