Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

Anthrax

February 2024

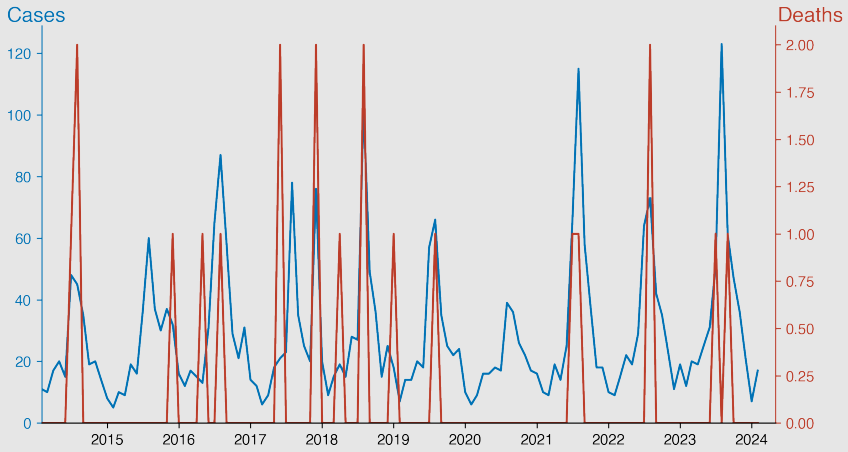
Introduction

Anthrax is a serious infectious disease caused by the bacterium Bacillus anthracis. It primarily affects livestock and wild animals, but humans can become infected through direct or indirect contact with sick animals. In humans, it can manifest in different forms, including cutaneous, inhalational, and gastrointestinal anthrax, depending on the route of infection. While cutaneous anthrax is the most common and least lethal form, inhalational anthrax is the most deadly. Effective vaccines and antibiotics are available, and prompt treatment is crucial for survival in severe cases.

Highlights

- The data reflects a clear seasonal trend with increased anthrax cases reported during the summer months consistently across the years; peak cases reported in August.
- Although the death rates have been very low compared to the total cases, there is a very sporadic trend with no consistent patterns.
- Despite occasional spikes, the overall trend from 2014 to February 2024 shows a stable situation with no major outbreaks or escalation in terms of reported cases or deaths.
- The most recent data for February 2024 shows a standard number of cases (17) with no deaths, indicating no imminent crisis.

Temporal Trend



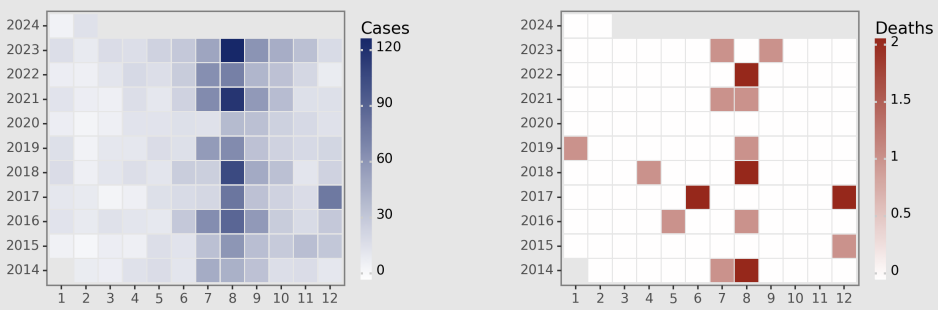
Cases Analysis

Anthrax cases in mainland China are cyclical, rising and falling with each year, peaking in the months of July through September. This pattern is likely attributable to increased human-animal contact during these peak agricultural months, as Anthrax is primarily transmitted via spores that affect grazing animals. Over the past decade, there's an overall upward trend, most notably with the highest number of cases reaching 123 in August 2023. This increase might be connected to changes in agricultural practices, climatic conditions, or surveillance and reporting capabilities.

Deaths Analysis

Deaths due to Anthrax are state-wise low throughout the ten-year period. A total of 14 deaths were reported across the decade. Two semi-regular patterns can be observed: Peaks in deaths often coincide with peaks in case counts, particularly in summer months, such as in August 2016, 2018, and 2021. The highest number of deaths occurs in August of 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2021, each reporting 2 deaths. The overall mortality rate appears to be quite low, suggesting effective medical treatment for diagnosed cases.

Distribution



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