United States Department of Agriculture

HPAI Outbreak 2014-2015

Policy for HPAI Mitigation

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This information may be revised as the outbreak progresses or with new scientific or epidemiological information.

Controlling and Containing the Current Outbreak

Three epidemiological principles form the foundation of the response effort. Actions are strongly recommended or required to support these epidemiological principles.

1. **Prevent contact between the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) viruses and susceptible poultry.** Quarantine of infected poultry, movement controls, and biosecurity reduce the risk that susceptible poultry will come into contact with the virus. People, materials, and conveyances may be contaminated with HPAI virus; contact between poultry and these items must be prevented to mitigate the risk of transmission.
    a. Mandatory biosecurity measures are critical to protect non-infected animals. All of the measures in the "General Biosecurity" section below are strongly recommended for all producers on all premises.
    b. All trucks and other vehicles potentially contaminated with avian influenza virus moving on and off of poultry premises must be cleaned and disinfected each time they enter or leave a premises (see "Truck and Vehicle Biosecurity").
    c. Feed that is contaminated should not be fed to poultry flocks until further notice, unless State and APHIS officials approve the mitigation techniques (such as heat or chemical treatment) conducted (see "Feed Biosecurity").
2. **Stop the production of HPAI virus by infected or exposed animals.** Rapid mass depopulation and disposal of infected and potentially infected poultry is required to stop the production of HPAI.
    a. Extraordinary methods may be required for depopulation to reduce the large amounts of virus produced by infected animals, in order to lower the risk of further spread and ongoing transmission.
    b. To contain and control the outbreak, restocking previously affected facilities is not recommended at this time. APHIS will not indemnify previously infected premises that repopulate prior to APHIS approval and subsequently become re-infected.
3. **Increase the disease resistance of susceptible poultry to the HPAI virus.** Strategic emergency vaccination may be used to increase the disease resistance in poultry.
    a. APHIS has approved vaccine (CEVA HVT-H5) for emergency use in certain States, per 9 CFR 106.
    b. Distribution of vaccine will be under the approval of the State Veterinarian of these States, and will be purchased by the producer.
    c. Turkey replacements will be prioritized initially given the limited quantities of vaccine available. Vaccination of chickens will be considered as vaccine availability increases. Use of other vaccines will be considered as these become available.
    d. If producers choose to repopulate premises, replacements should be vaccinated.

General Biosecurity

Biosecurity is the most critical element to protecting non-infected flocks from currently circulating HPAI viruses. These measures should be heightened in States that have ongoing HPAI infection, as well as in production systems with infected premises. The following biosecurity practices are strongly recommended for all producers on all premises as part of the HPAI response, and should be part of a comprehensive biosecurity plan.

1. **Keep poultry away from wild birds.** Keep all poultry away from areas where they could potentially share an environment with wild birds, particularly waterfowl or shorebirds. Ideally, poultry should be housed indoors.
2. **Don't let wild birds (or fecal material) into barns.**
    a. Close barn doors at all times.
    b. Consider delaying total cleans of finishing farms until the current HPAI outbreak has been contained. This will protect accidental introduction of contaminated material onto the farm, will help avoid any damage to thawing driveways, and will avoid creation of watering holes for migrating birds.
    c. Do not move equipment into or between barns containing poultry without thorough cleaning and disinfecting, particularly when it is muddy outside.
3. **Nothing should enter a barn unless it's been properly cleaned and disinfected.** Equipment (including parts, loading panels, etc.) should be stored inside so that wild birds (or their droppings) don't come into contact with it. Avoid driving trucks (such as shavings and poult trucks) into barns; if that's not possible, clean and disinfect them thoroughly before entering.
4. **Use barn-specific boots and coveralls.** Keep protective gear in the barn's entryway and use it each time a person enters the barn. Upon exit, remove the coveralls and boots and leave in the entryway. They should not be worn outside.
5. **Eliminate standing water** to prevent wild waterfowl from gathering on the farm.
6. **Address feed spills as soon as they occur** to avoid attracting wild birds to the farm.
7. **Eliminate unnecessary farm visits.** Nonessential personnel should not enter the farm.
8. **Know where to get HPAI information.** The following sites provide guidance on HPAI.

    States

    a. Minnesota Board of Animal Health: https://www.bah.state.mn.us/avian-influenza
    b. Iowa Department of Agriculture: http://www.iowaagriculture.gov/avianinfluenza.asp
    c. Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection: http://datcp.wi.gov/Animals/Animal_Diseases/Avian_Influenza/index.aspx

    USDA

    a. USDA APHIS Biosecurity for the Birds: http://healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov/
    b. USDA Avian Influenza: http://www.usda.gov/birdflu

c. USDA APHIS Foreign Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Plan: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/fadprep

Partnerships (Secure Food Supply Plans)

a. Secure Turkey Supply Plan: http://www.secureturkeysupply.com/

b. Secure Egg Supply Plan: http://secureeggsupply.com/

Truck and Vehicle Biosecurity

In States with ongoing HPAI transmission, all trucks and other vehicles potentially contaminated with avian influenza virus should be cleaned and disinfected before entering and after leaving a premises. These vehicles include (but are not limited to) pullet trucks, shell egg trucks, feed trucks, and tankers. For specific guidance on cleaning and disinfecting vehicles, see the *HPAI Cleaning and Disinfection SOP*, found on the APHIS emergency management website.

Feed Biosecurity

Wild birds—including all waterfowl—should not have access to any feed that will be or is being fed to any type of poultry. Feed must be protected from external birds and their feces, as well as any other potential contaminated material. Feed that is already contaminated should not be fed to poultry flocks until further notice, unless appropriate mitigation techniques (such as heat or chemical treatment), approved by State and APHIS officials, are applied.

Emergency Vaccination

The CEVA HVT-H5 vaccine will be approved for emergency use per 9 CFR 106 in Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Additional States may be approved as needed. Distribution in each State will be under the approval of the State Veterinarian, and the vaccine will be purchased by producers. Initially, use will be prioritized in turkey replacements. If additional quantities of vaccine become available, use may be allowed in chickens. Other vaccines may also be approved.

Restocking of Infected Premises

A primary goal of the HPAI response is to ensure that the response efforts do not cause more damage and disruption than the disease outbreak itself. APHIS understands an HPAI detection on a premises poses a tremendous cost to producers, growers, owners, and companies, and that the longer the premises remains empty, the higher this cost may become.

However, there are important factors that need to be considered regarding restocking. In particular, until the outbreak has been contained, premises may still be at a higher risk of HPAI infection due to large amounts of virus production and the ability of HPAI to live for extended periods on surfaces, liquids, and other materials. Additionally, no one benefits if a previously infected premises re-breaks with HPAI after restocking. Another round of depopulation, disposal, cleaning and disinfection, and another fallow period puts added stress on resources—which are already stretched.

Therefore, APHIS urges extreme caution restocking premises, particularly in States or areas experiencing cold weather (particularly below freezing), and for those experiencing widespread HPAI infection. APHIS recommends that previously infected premises remain fallow and not be restocked until the outbreak is contained; however, if producers choose to repopulate, replacement stock should be vaccinated. State and APHIS officials must concur prior to any restocking activities. If restocking occurs without the approval of State and APHIS officials, this repopulation is at the producer's risk; APHIS **will not** indemnify previously affected premises that are restocked without APHIS approval and subsequently become re-infected.