



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

24 JUNE 2017

UPDATE ON AVIAN INFLUENZA CONFIRMED IN MPUMALANGA

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N8 was confirmed in a broiler breeder site in Mpumalanga on Thursday 22 June 2017. HPAI is a rapidly spreading viral disease that can infect many types of birds and it is highly contagious. It exists naturally in many birds and can be transmitted by coming into contact with infected animals or through ingestion of infected food or water.

The affected farm has been quarantined and culling of the affected animals has been completed. The department is conducting forward and backward tracing to trace movement of all poultry in and out of the farm in order to establish the source of the Influenza. The department has established a 30km control zone in Mpumalanga and Free State. The two Provinces are conducting surveillance in the 30km control zone for other potentially affected properties. All provinces have been notified and are on high alert.

The following control measures have been implemented to prevent spread of disease:

- A complete standstill of movement of poultry and poultry products on the infected farm(s). Nothing is to enter or leave the farm
- Birds at the infected sites will be euthanized humanely
- State Vets are conducting inspections starting with all the farms within a 3 km and a further 27 km (30km) radius around the affected farm to gather information on the health status of the birds.
- Poultry and poultry products may only move from these farms with a State Veterinary Permit
- **We have placed a General ban on the sale of live spent hens across the country until further notice**

Our trading partners were formally notified of the outbreak in Mpumalanga. Trading partners require a declaration of country freedom of highly pathogenic avian influenza for trade in fresh poultry meat and unprocessed poultry products, which we are currently unable to provide due to the confirmation of HPAI on the Mpumalanga farm. Exports of processed poultry products, live chickens and fresh products from registered poultry compartments will continue depending on the requirements of the importing countries.

To date, **no human cases of infection with avian influenza H5N8 have been reported**, however people handling wild birds, sick or dying poultry must wear protective clothing and wash their hands with disinfectants. Meat from healthy poultry is safe for consumption as it is subjected to strict meat inspection processes at abattoirs. We urge people to avoid consumption of birds found dead, dying or sick.

No effective treatment for the disease has been found. Infected animals must be humanely destroyed and disposed of properly to prevent the disease from spreading. If you suspect your flock has contracted the disease, quarantine the affected birds and area immediately. Notify your nearest State Veterinarian of any suspected cases.

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