

Summary of Events: Pope County High Pathogenic Avian Influenza

March 5, 2015

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has confirmed the presence of highly pathogenic H5N2 avian influenza in a commercial turkey flock in Pope County, Minnesota. This is the first finding in the Mississippi flyway. Samples from the turkey breeder replacement flock, which had experienced increased mortality, were initially tested at the University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory and were confirmed positive at the APHIS National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa. The Board of Animal Health quarantined the affected premises and all remaining birds will be euthanized.

The Minnesota Department of Health has been in contact with all poultry workers at the affected facility to ensure they are taking proper precautions; however, at this time there have been no human infections associated with this virus. The risk to the public with HPAI H5N2 is considered to be low. [Read the complete USDA Stakeholder Announcement on the USDA APHIS website.](#)

March 6, 2015

Today, animal health officials began contacting individuals in the area surrounding the affected poultry premises in Pope County. Backyard flocks that are identified in the 10 km control zone will be placed under quarantine by the Board and will be tested for influenza. There are no additional commercial poultry flocks in the control zone area.

An outer surveillance zone (10 km beyond the control zone) has been mapped out. Board and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) field staff members will begin notifying individuals in the surveillance zone over the weekend. Owners identified with commercial or backyard flocks in the outer surveillance zone will be updated on the situation and asked to closely monitor their birds.

The producer of the affected farm has worked with the USDA to complete appraisal and indemnity agreements. Birds in only one of the producer's five barns showed signs of and tested positive for H5N2. However, remaining birds (housed in the other four barns) will be euthanized over the weekend because they have been exposed to the virus.

There have been no cases of human illness as a result of H5N2. The risk to the public is very low and there is no food safety concern.

March 7, 2015

The turkeys housed in the barn on the affected site and in the barns one-half mile away were euthanized on March 6 and 7. Carcasses will be composted inside the barns. Samples taken from birds in the four non-affected barns have tested negative for HPAI.

Control Area

Animal health officials continued to contact known poultry premises in the control area (10 km) and identify additional flocks by driving the roads. Thus far, a total of 17 backyard flocks in the control area have been tested and placed under a 30-day quarantine. There are no commercial poultry farms in the control area.

March 8, 2015

Control Area

We expect to wrap up our work searching for poultry farms and taking samples in the control area today.

Surveillance Zone

There are about 70 additional potential sites with poultry in the outer 10 km surveillance zone. Board of Animal Health and USDA staff members continue to contact individuals in the surveillance zone to determine whether there are birds currently on the premises. Bird owners and poultry producers in this area will be updated on the situation and asked to closely monitor their flocks and report any sick or dead birds to the Board.

March 9, 2015

Control Area

All poultry premises in the control area have been identified and samples have been submitted for testing. Test results from samples submitted over the weekend are starting to come in; so far all tests have been negative for HPAI.

Surveillance Zone

Bird owners and poultry producers in this area should continue to practice strict biosecurity and closely monitor their birds. Sick or dead birds should be immediately reported to their veterinarian or the Minnesota Board of Animal Health.

March 11, 2015

Control Area

Backyard birds on a total of 38 premises (not counting the affected farm) in the control area were tested for avian influenza. We are pleased to announce that all tests were negative. These birds remain under quarantine to allow time for additional observation.

Surveillance Zone

We have finished our work in the surveillance zone. In total, we made contacts with individuals on over 60 premises. The purpose was to provide them with information on the H5N2 situation and advise them on biosecurity and close monitoring of their flocks.

March 20, 2015

Control Area

In Compliance with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) requirements, the 30 backyard flocks in the control area will undergo a second round of sampling over the weekend. The first round of surveillance testing was completed nearly two weeks ago and all tests came back negative for avian influenza. Additionally, there have been no reports of sick birds or unusual death loss.

The control area flocks will remain under quarantine until the second round of surveillance testing is complete, results are received and other requirements are met. The Board continues to work with the USDA to determine when quarantines can be lifted.

Affected Farm

The farm in Pope County remains under quarantine. The Turkey carcasses are composted inside the barns; a process that will take about a month to complete.