

1. Situation in EU 2019 as regards AI and last outbreak of LPAI in France

In relation to HPAI:

- At the beginning of 2019 4 outbreaks in poultry holdings in Bulgaria (08/04/19: last outbreak HPAI subtype H5N8)
- Since the mid-April 2019 **no HPAI outbreaks** in the EU in poultry holdings
- Two wild birds tested positive for **subtype H5N6** in Denmark in January 2019 (since then no further positive cases in EU)

In relation to LPAI:

- **LPAI H5** in captive birds 1 outbreak in Germany in April
- **LPAI H7** in poultry 1 outbreak in broiler farm in Italy (July)
- **LPAI H5** in poultry 3 outbreaks in mallard duck farms in Denmark (between February-June) and 1 outbreak in mallard duck farm in France (October)

Outbreak in mallard duck farm in France

Testing was done by CA in the context of surveillance programme in mallard duck farm.

On 03 October 2019 low pathogenic H5 virus was confirmed by the national reference laboratory in one mallards batch, that showed no symptoms. Following confirmation of outbreak 2600 mallard ducks killed.

2. Summary of the Overview report as regards AI situation in the world (EFSA report 2019)

A decreasing number of outbreaks in poultry and wild birds in Asia, Africa and the Middle East was observed during the past 6 months.

Currently there is no evidence of a new HPAI virus incursion from Asia into Europe.

No human infections due to HPAI A(H5N8) or A(H5N6) viruses - detected in wild birds and poultry outbreaks in Europe - have been reported so far and the risk of zoonotic transmission to the general public in Europe is considered very low.

3. Requirements in relation to biosecurity measures (preparation for winter season)

The wild birds, in particular migratory water birds, are known to be the natural host for AI viruses of low pathogenicity, but also can carry HPAI viruses, which can then spread these viruses over long distances between countries and continents.

The presence of AI viruses and in particular HPAI viruses in wild birds poses a continual threat for the direct and indirect introduction of these viruses into holdings where poultry is kept, in particular during the seasonal movements of migratory birds.

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION (EU) No 2018/1136 lays down specific requirements in relation to risk mitigation and reinforced biosecurity measures. These measures should help prevent from introduction of HPAI into the poultry holdings, in particular that are in high risk areas.

High risk area is defined as area where the risk factors for the introduction of HPAI viruses into holdings is very high and can be considered based on:

- their geographical location in areas in Member States through which migratory birds are travelling or where these birds are resting during their migratory movements,
- their proximity to wet areas, ponds, swamps, lakes, rivers or the sea where migratory birds may gather and have their stop-over places,
- their geographical location in areas with a high density of migratory birds, particularly water birds,
- poultry kept in open-air holdings, where contact between wild birds and poultry cannot be prevented or sufficiently controlled,
- current and past detections of HPAI viruses in poultry, other captive birds and wild birds,
- the geographical location of the holding is in an area with a high density of holdings, in particular those keeping ducks and geese and any poultry with open-air access

Depending on the assessment of the epidemiological situation the CA, including farmers shall **prohibit** the following activities in **high risk areas**:

(a) the keeping together of ducks and geese with other poultry species, unless:

- (i) the risk of virus introduction is deemed insignificant due to the characteristics of the holding and the risk mitigation measures in place that are considered sufficient by the competent authority; or
- (ii) poultry species other than ducks and geese are used as sentinels according to the provisions of the competent authority;

(b) the keeping of poultry in the open air, unless:

- (i) the poultry are protected against contact with wild birds with nets, roofs, horizontal fabrics or by other appropriate means to prevent contact; or

- (ii) the poultry are supplied with feed and water indoors or under a shelter which sufficiently discourages the access of wild birds and thereby prevents contact by wild birds with the feed or water intended for the poultry;
- (c) the use of outdoor water reservoirs for poultry (unless it is required for animal welfare reasons for certain poultry and they are sufficiently screened against wild birds);
- (d) the provision of water to poultry from surface water reservoirs that can be accessed by wild birds (unless the water undergoes treatment that ensures the inactivation of avian influenza viruses);
- (e) the gathering of poultry and other captive birds at markets, shows, exhibitions and cultural events; unless such events are organised and managed in such a way that the risk of virus spread by possibly infected birds to other birds is reduced to a minimum;

Final remarks:

The owners of holdings should take appropriate and practicable measures in those **high risk areas** to reduce the risk of the transmission of HPAI viruses from wild birds to poultry.

The risk mitigation and reinforced biosecurity measures mentioned above should help at preventing wild birds, and in particular migratory water birds, from coming into direct or indirect contact with poultry and, in particular with ducks and geese (especially in the upcoming migration season).