



Information on Avian Influenza Control Measures



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Cover: *Wild birds considered most likely to carry HPAI to Ireland*

1. INTRODUCTION

This information leaflet is intended to give an outline of control measures that must be applied in the event of a suspicion or confirmation of avian influenza in poultry or in wild birds or where an “avian influenza high-risk area” is declared.

The information is designed for all stake holders, in particular people involved in keeping birds, the poultry industry and other industries/personnel that visit premises containing birds (e.g. feed suppliers, rendering plants, composting plants, hauliers, veterinary practitioners).

The control measures for avian influenza are laid down in European Community legislation (in particular Council Directive 2005/94/EC, Commission Decisions 2006/415, 2006/563 and 2005/734) and in national legislation.

All measures are risk-based and may evolve during the course of an outbreak. Up-to-date information during an outbreak may be found by:

- Consulting the Department’s website at www.agriculture.gov.ie
- Ringing the Department’s hotline on 1890 252 283
- Contacting your local District Veterinary Office (numbers on back of this leaflet), or Local Disease Control Centre if this has been established (numbers will be publicised during an outbreak)

In general, the movement of poultry and poultry products within and from restricted zones is prohibited (as outlined in sections 4 to 7). However, movements may be permitted under licences in certain circumstances and licences will only be issued if the assessment indicates that the movement does not present a risk. If you require a licence to move birds/products you should contact your DVO (or Local Disease Control Centre).

2. WHAT IS AVIAN INFLUENZA?

What is avian influenza (bird flu):

Avian influenza is a highly contagious viral disease affecting the respiratory, digestive and/or nervous system of many species of birds. It is caused by a Type A influenza virus. There are two types of avian influenza virus. These are called low pathogenic (LPAI) and highly pathogenic (HPAI), depending on the severity of the disease that they cause in birds.

Clinical signs of avian influenza:

Symptoms may include any of the following:

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI)

- Depression
- Loss of appetite, excessive thirst
- Cessation of egg laying
- Respiratory signs (coughing, sneezing)
- Nervous signs (drooping wings, dragging legs, twisting of the head and neck, circling, complete paralysis)
- Swelling and blue discoloration of combs and wattles
- Diarrhoea
- Sudden death
- Mortality rates of up to 100%

Low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI)

- Mild respiratory disease
- Depression
- Drop in egg production

3. SUSPECTED AVIAN INFLUENZA IN POULTRY

Reporting disease:

It is a legal requirement to notify any unusual increased mortalities, reduced egg production or reduced intake of feed or water to your private veterinary practitioner.

If your birds are sick and you suspect that it could be a result of avian influenza:

It is a legal requirement to notify a suspicion of avian influenza to your local District Veterinary Office (DVO) or the Department of Agriculture's headquarters in Dublin (see contact numbers in **Section 10** below).

An after-hours paging service for reporting suspected exotic diseases operates after working hours and at weekends.

What happens when you report a case of suspected avian influenza?

1. You must not allow any birds, people, carcasses, eggs, litter/manure, vehicles or equipment to be moved off the premises pending an inspection of your flock by a veterinary inspector
2. A veterinary inspector from the local DVO will visit your premises to examine your birds and your records, and will take samples from the birds for avian influenza testing
3. The veterinary inspector will serve a formal restriction notice placing controls on the movement of birds, people, carcasses, eggs, litter/manure, vehicles, equipment or anything liable to transmit disease to and from the premises
4. The veterinary inspector will ensure that the appropriate measures are taken to protect the health of all personnel in contact with the birds
5. You must house all birds on the site or otherwise isolate them from wild birds
6. You must install disinfection facilities at the entrances and exits of the premises and the bird houses

In the event that the symptoms indicate a strong suspicion of HPAI, additional measures may be taken:

- The birds may be slaughtered in advance of confirmation if there is a risk of spread of disease
- Temporary movement controls on poultry and poultry products may be put in place in the area around the premises

If HPAI H5N1 is suspected, the Restricted Zones that apply in the case of confirmation must be applied (see **Section 6**)

If the samples are negative for avian influenza:

The restrictions on movements to and from the premises will be removed.

If the samples are positive for avian influenza:

The measures that apply will depend on what type of virus is confirmed – low pathogenic (H5 and H7 subtypes), highly pathogenic (but not H5N1 subtype) or highly pathogenic H5N1 subtype. The three scenarios are set out in **Sections 4-6** below.

4. CONFIRMED LPAI IN POULTRY

Measures on the infected premises:

- All infected poultry and captive birds will be slaughtered (in certain cases a derogation from this may be allowed – this would be decided on a case-by-case basis)
- The carcasses of slaughtered birds and eggs will be destroyed
- An investigation will be carried out by the veterinary inspector (to identify the possible source of infection and all contact premises)
- The premises must be cleaned and disinfected
- The premises may not be re-stocked for 21 days after the cleaning and disinfection has been completed

Measures within the Low-Pathogenic Avian Influenza Restricted Zone (LPAI RZ):

- A census of all premises containing commercial poultry or captive birds will be carried out
- All commercial poultry flocks will be examined by a veterinary inspector and samples taken for avian influenza testing
- Movements of **poultry, other captive birds, other animals from poultry farms, eggs and poultry litter/manure** are prohibited (except under certain conditions and under licence)
- Bird gatherings are banned
- The release of game birds is banned
- Biosecurity measures must be implemented in the case of people and vehicles moving to and from premises containing poultry or captive birds (see **Section 9**)

The LPAI RZ will normally be within a radius of **1 km** from the infected premises. **Check points** to control movements of vehicles transporting poultry or poultry-related products into/out of the Zones may or may not be put in place, depending on the particular circumstances.

The LPAI RZ will remain in place for at least **21 days** after the preliminary cleaning and disinfection of the infected premises has been completed. In the event that the infected flock is not slaughtered, this period must be extended to at least 42 days.

5. CONFIRMED HPAI (not H5N1) IN POULTRY

Measures on the infected premises:

- All infected poultry and captive birds will be slaughtered (limited derogations are possible for certain types of holding – these would be decided on a case-by-case basis)
- The carcasses of slaughtered birds and eggs will be destroyed
- An investigation will be carried out by the veterinary inspector (to identify the possible source of infection and all contact premises)
- Contact flocks will be restricted and investigated
- Eggs and meat that have originated from the flock during the risk period will be traced and destroyed
- The premises must be cleaned and disinfected
- The premises may not be re-stocked for 21 days after the cleaning and disinfection has been completed

Measures within the Highly-Pathogenic Avian Influenza Restricted Zone (HPAI RZ):

The **Restricted Zone** is divided into two Zones:

- the **Protection Zone** has a radius of at least **3 km** around the infected premises
- the **Surveillance Zone** is outside the Protection Zone and has a radius of at least **10 km** around the infected premises

Checkpoints will be put in place to control movements of vehicles transporting poultry or poultry-related products into/out of the Zones.

A **Further Restricted Zone** may be declared outside the Surveillance Zone if this is considered necessary to control the disease. The measures to be applied in this Zone will be determined depending on a risk assessment carried out at the time.

Measures in the Protection Zone:

- All poultry and captive birds must be housed or at least isolated from wild birds
- A census of all premises containing poultry or captive birds will be carried out
- All flocks containing poultry or captive birds will be examined by a veterinary inspector at least once before the Zone is lifted, and if necessary samples may be taken for avian influenza testing
- Movements of **poultry, other captive birds, other animals from poultry farms, litter/manure from poultry farms, bird carcasses, poultry meat and eggs** are prohibited (except under certain conditions and under licence)
- Bird gatherings are banned
- The release of game birds is banned
- Biosecurity measures must be implemented in the case of people and vehicles moving to and from premises containing poultry or captive birds (see **Section 9**)

Measures in the Surveillance Zone:

- A census of all premises containing commercial poultry will be carried out
- Movements of **poultry, other animals from poultry farms, litter/manure from poultry farms, and eggs** are prohibited (except under certain conditions and under licence)

- Bird gatherings are banned
- The release of game birds is banned
- Biosecurity measures must be implemented in the case of people and vehicles moving to and from premises containing poultry or captive birds (see **Section 9**)

How long do the Zones stay in place?

- The **Protection Zone** must stay in place for at least **21 days** after the preliminary cleaning and disinfection of the infected premises has been carried out, and then the Zone becomes part of the Surveillance Zone
- The **Surveillance Zone** must stay in place for at least **30 days** after the preliminary cleaning and disinfection of the infected premises has been carried out.



6. CONFIRMED HPAI (H5N1) IN POULTRY

Measures on the infected premises:

- All infected poultry and captive birds will be slaughtered (limited derogations are possible for certain types of holding – these would be decided on a case-by-case basis)
- The carcasses of slaughtered birds and eggs will be destroyed
- An investigation will be carried out by the veterinary inspector (to identify the possible source of infection and all contact premises)
- Contact flocks will be restricted and investigated
- Eggs and meat that have originated from the flock during the risk period will be traced and destroyed
- The premises must be cleaned and disinfected
- The premises may not be re-stocked for 21 days after the cleaning and disinfection has been completed

Measures within the HPAI Restricted Zone (HPAI RZ):

The **Restricted Zone** is divided into two Areas:

Area A consists of:

- the **Protection Zone** with a radius of at least **3 km** around the infected premises
- the **Surveillance Zone** which is outside the Protection Zone and has a radius of at least **10 km** around the infected premises.

Area B consists of:

- An additional **buffer zone** around Area A. The size of this will depend on the number and location of the outbreaks.

Checkpoints will be put in place to control movements of vehicles transporting poultry or poultry-related products into/out of Area A only.

The measures that apply in the Protection and Surveillance Zones are similar to those when subtypes other than H5N1 are involved, but additional measures apply to wild game birds, wild game meat and animal by-products derived from poultry/birds.

Measures in the Area A Protection Zone:

- All poultry and captive birds must be housed or at least isolated from wild birds
- A census of all premises containing poultry or captive birds will be carried out
- All flocks containing poultry or captive birds will be examined by a veterinary inspector at least once before the Zone is lifted, and if necessary samples may be taken for avian influenza testing
- Movements of **poultry, other captive birds, wild game birds, other animals from poultry farms, litter/manure from poultry farms, bird carcasses, other animal by-products derived from poultry/birds, poultry and wild feathered game meat and eggs** are prohibited (except under certain conditions and under licence)
- Bird gatherings are banned
- The release of game birds is banned
- Biosecurity measures must be implemented in the case of people and vehicles moving to and from premises containing poultry or captive birds (see **Section 9**)

Measures in the Area A Surveillance Zone:

- A census of all premises containing commercial poultry will be carried out
- Movements of **poultry, wild game birds, other animals from poultry farms, litter/manure from poultry farms, wild feathered game meat, eggs, bird carcasses and other animal by-products derived from poultry/birds** are prohibited (except under certain conditions and under licence)
- Bird gatherings are banned
- The release of game birds is banned
- Biosecurity measures must be implemented in the case of people and vehicles moving to and from premises containing poultry or captive birds (see **Section 9**)

Measures in Area B:

- Movements of **poultry, wild game birds, other captive birds, wild feathered game meat, hatching eggs, bird carcasses and other animal by-products derived from poultry/birds** are prohibited (except under certain conditions and under licence)
- Bird gatherings are banned

How long do the Zones stay in place?

- The **Protection Zone** must stay in place for at least **21 days** after the preliminary cleaning and disinfection of the infected premises has been carried out, and then the Zone becomes part of the Surveillance Zone
- The **Surveillance Zone** must stay in place for at least **30 days** after the preliminary cleaning and disinfection of the infected premises has been carried out.
- **Area B** will stay in place until a risk assessment has determined that it is safe to remove it.

7. SUSPECTED/CONFIRMED HPAI H5N1 IN WILD BIRDS

The **Wild Bird Restricted Zone** will consist of two Areas:

- A **Control Area** with a radius of at least **3 km** around the location where the wild bird was found
- A **Monitoring Area** with a radius of **10 km** around the location where the wild bird was found

The limits of the Areas will be decided in conjunction with ornithology experts who will assist the Department of Agriculture in assessing the area at risk. The limits may be modified in the light of such assessments. **Check points** to control movements of vehicles transporting poultry or poultry-related products into/out of the Zones may or may not be put in place, depending on the particular circumstances.

Measures in the Control Area:

- A census of all poultry will be carried out
- Commercial poultry and targeted poultry/captive bird flocks at particular risk will be examined by a veterinary inspector and samples may be taken for avian influenza testing
- Increased surveillance will be carried out at wild bird habitats
- Warning notices will be placed around the area where the infected wild bird carcasses were found
- Checks on biosecurity in poultry flocks will be carried out by Department of Agriculture staff
- Movements of **poultry, wild game birds, other captive birds, poultry and wild feathered game meat, hatching eggs, bird carcasses and other animal by-products derived from poultry/birds** are prohibited (except under certain conditions and under licence)
- Gatherings of birds are banned
- Hunting of wild birds is banned
- Release of game birds is banned

Measures in the Monitoring Area:

- A census of all poultry will be carried out
- Increased surveillance will be carried out at wild bird habitats
- Checks on biosecurity in poultry flocks will be carried out by Department of Agriculture staff
- Movements of **poultry and other captive birds** are prohibited (except under certain conditions and under licence)
- Gatherings of birds are banned
- Hunting of wild birds is banned
- Release of game birds is banned

How long will the Restricted Areas stay in place?

- The **Control Area** must stay in place for at least **21 days** from the date of collection of the wild bird carcasses, and then the Zone becomes part of the Surveillance Zone
- The **Monitoring Area** must stay in place for at least **30 days** from the date of collection of the wild bird carcasses.

There are no controls on people visiting the Zone, except in limited circumstances. Additional information may be found in the Department's risk assessment on "*Avian influenza in wild birds in public parks and aquatic amenity areas in Ireland*" which may accessed from the Department's website.



8. AVIAN INFLUENZA HIGH-RISK AREA

When is an “avian influenza high-risk area” declared?

The Department of Agriculture regularly assesses the risk of introduction of HPAI H5N1 by wild birds, in conjunction with ornithological experts from the NPWS and BirdWatch Ireland. If the risk is high, an “avian influenza high-risk area” will be declared. This area may include the whole country.

Checkpoints to control movements of vehicles transporting poultry or poultry-related products will not be put in place.

Measures in “avian influenza high-risk areas”:

- Birds must be housed inside (or at least fed under shelter to deter wild birds)
- Ducks and geese must be separated from other types of poultry
- Birds must not have access to water outside (unless this has been screened to prevent wild bird access)
- Surface water supplies accessed by wild birds must not be used for poultry (unless the water has been chlorinated in accordance with Department of Agriculture specifications)
- Keepers of poultry/birds will be required to notify any unusual or unexplained mortalities, decreased egg production or decreased feed/water consumption in their flocks to the Department of Agriculture
- Checks on biosecurity in poultry/bird flocks will be carried out by Department of Agriculture staff
- Gatherings of birds are banned

9. BIOSECURITY MEASURES FOR PERSONNEL AND VEHICLES VISITING POULTRY FARMS IN AREAS INFECTED WITH AVIAN INFLUENZA

In the event of an outbreak of LPAI or HPAI in poultry, all persons entering or leaving premises containing birds in the Restricted Zones must by law observe biosecurity measures. In addition all vehicles and equipment for transporting live poultry or other captive birds, meat, feed, manure, slurry or bedding and any other material or substances likely to be contaminated must be cleaned and disinfected. The following must be applied:

1. Poultry sites should be visited only when it is essential to do so.
2. Either use dedicated vehicles in the Restricted Zone or arrange schedule so that visits to premises in the Zone are last in the day.
3. Owners/persons in charge must keep a record of all visits, including:
 - Cab and trailer registration numbers
 - Driver's name
 - Date and time of visit
 - Date, time and location of vehicle cleaning and disinfection.
4. Where possible, delivery/collection should be completed at the perimeter of the site.
5. Personnel must avoid walking onto a farm unnecessarily – in particular personnel should not enter the poultry house unless this is essential.
6. Follow any additional biosecurity instructions required by the flock owner or Department, including signing the visitor's diary.
7. On arrival at a site, personnel should:
 - Disinfect footwear in foot-bath
 - Put on washable or disposable protective clothing (footwear and overalls)
 - Wash handsBefore departure personnel should:
 - Disinfect footwear and protective clothing (or leave on site if disposable)
 - Wash hands.

8. Vehicle cleaning and disinfection:

- On arrival at the farm, wheels, wheel arches, outside and underside must be disinfected
- Before leaving the farm, wheels, wheel arches, outside and underside must be washed and disinfected, ensuring that the surfaces are visibly clean
- As soon as possible after use, wash and disinfect all surfaces which may have come into contact with contaminated material, such as:
 - o Wheels, wheel arches, outside and underside
 - o Trailer
 - o Equipment (e.g. trolleys, crates, modules, delivery pipes, sheeting, covers)
- Wipe areas of the driver's cab that may have been contaminated, with disinfectant.

9. Drivers should avoid contact with poultry or other birds on premises outside the infected area for at least 3 days (72 hours), if possible.

Only those disinfectants approved by the Department of Agriculture for use against avian influenza (see list on the Department's website at: www.agriculture.gov.ie) should be used.

10. CONTACT DETAILS

AVIAN INFLUENZA HELPLINE 1890-252-283

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES & FOOD LOCAL DISTRICT VETERINARY OFFICES

COUNTY	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
Carlow	Athy Road, Carlow	059 9170022
Cavan	Farnham St., Cavan	049 4368200
Clare	Government Offices, Kilrush Road, Ennis, Co. Clare	065 6866042
Cork North	Hibernian House, 80A South Mall, Cork	021 4851400
Cork Central	Hibernian House, 80A South Mall, Cork	021 4851400
Cork West	Darrara, Clonakilty Co. Cork	023 36200
Donegal	Meeting House St, Raphoe, Co. Donegal	074 9145298
Dublin/		
Wicklow East	St John's House, High St, Tallaght, Co. Dublin	01 4149900
Galway	Dockgate Building, Merchants Rd., Galway	091 507600
Kerry	Spa Road, Tralee, Co. Kerry	066 7145052
Kildare/		
Wicklow West	Poplar House, Poplar Square, Naas, Co. Kildare	045 873035
Kilkenny	Hebron Road, Kilkenny	056 7772400
Laois	Abbeyleix Road, PortLaoise, Co. Laois	057 8674400
Leitrim	Cranmore Road, Sligo	071 9682000
Limerick	Houston Hall, Ballycummin Avenue, Raheen Industrial Estate, Raheen, Co. Limerick	061 500900
Longford	Ballinalee Road, Longford	043 50020
Louth	North Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	041 9838933
Mayo	Michael Davitt House, Castlebar, Co Mayo	094 9035300
Meath	Athlumney, Kilcairn, Navan, Co Meath	046 9082900
Monaghan	Main Street, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan	042 9748800
Offaly	Clonminch, Tullamore, Co. Offaly	057 9346037
Roscommon	Convent Road, Roscommon	090 6630100
Sligo	Cranmore Road, Sligo	071 9142023
Tipperary North	St Conlon's Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary	067 50014
Tipperary South	Government Offices, Davis Street, Tipperary	062 80100
Waterford	Govt. Offices, The Glen, Co. Waterford	051 301700
Westmeath	Bellview, Dublin Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath	044 9339300
Wexford	Vinegar Hill Lane, Enniscorthy, Co Wexford	053 9242008



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