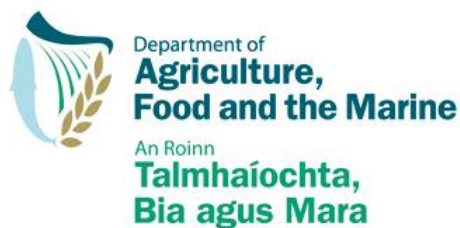


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203/16

23rd December 2016

Department Issues Housing Notice for Birds as a Precautionary Measure Against Avian Influenza

The Department today announced that the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Mr Michael Creed TD, has made regulations under the Animal Health and Welfare Act 2013 requiring flock keepers to confine all poultry and captive birds in their possession or under their control in a secure building to which wild birds, or other animals do not have access and to apply particular bio-security measures. The Regulations, entitled Avian Influenza (Precautionary Confinement of Birds) Regulations 2016, provide for precautionary measures, against avian influenza (bird flu).

These measures are being taken against a background where an outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N8 was confirmed in a turkey flock near the coast in Lincolnshire, England, last week and also in a dead wild duck in Carmarthenshire, Wales this week. The H5N8 subtype of avian influenza has been responsible for a number of outbreaks of disease in both wild birds and poultry in several European countries since the end of October.

The Department would also like to remind those involved in arranging bird gatherings that these take place under a general licence the terms of which place responsibilities on organisers of such events, emphasising in particular the need to provide advance notification

to the Department and the application of bio-security measures. Details on advance notification are available on the Departments website.

http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian_influenza/informationonshowsexhibitionsraces/

Although the H5N8 subtype can cause serious disease in poultry and other birds, no human infections with this virus have been reported world-wide and therefore risk to humans is considered to be very low.

Poultry flock owners should remain vigilant for any signs of disease in their flocks, maintain strict biosecurity measures and report any disease suspicion to their nearest Department Veterinary Office.

An early warning system is in place with Birdwatch Ireland, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the National Association of Regional Game Councils with regard to surveillance for signs of disease in wild birds.

The Department continues to closely monitor and assess the disease situation and maintains close contact with our counterparts in DAERA on the matter.

Further information:

Further information on avian influenza can be found here:

http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian_influenza/birdflunews/

A list of Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine offices and their contact details is available at: <http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/contact/>

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