



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

National Disease Control Centre

Avian Influenza Alert

Number 09 of 2020

04/06/2020

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Avian Influenza

1. High Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N8 - Europe

Since AI Alert No. 8 issued on 24th April 2020 the epidemiological situation in Europe is as follows:

- Hungarian authorities have confirmed a further 87 outbreaks since the 24th April 2020. 84 of these were secondary outbreaks and 3 were primary outbreaks. The primary outbreaks were in the Békés region in commercial Turkey and Geese flocks with a total of 44,542 birds affected. The outbreaks in the Békés region are in close proximity to the border with Romania and as a result the competent authorities of both EU member states have collaborated in the establishment of necessary surveillance zones.
- Hungary have now recorded a total of 271 outbreaks.
- The number of outbreaks being reported by Hungary in recent weeks has dropped significantly (outbreaks per week since 20th of April until 04th June: 46, 24, 10, 3, 1, 2 and 1).
- No other EU country has reported any cases of HPAI in the period from 24/04/2020 to 03/06/2020. This is in line with the seasonal occurrence of avian influenza and the fact that we are moving out of the high risk period for the disease.
- The total number of outbreaks of HPAI H5N8 in Europe 2020 to date now stands at 325. See attached table for summary.

2. Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza H6N1

Outbreaks in Ireland

- DAFM has confirmed Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) of the H6N1 subtype in 4 further poultry flocks in County Monaghan.
- The last case was confirmed LPAI H6N1 on the 03/06/2020
- This brings the total number of LPAI H6N1 outbreaks to 13
- The confirmed flocks include 11 table egg layer flocks and 2 fattening turkey flocks.
- Presenting clinical signs in affected flocks have included:
 - Significant drop in egg production
 - Reduced feed intake
 - Mild depression (occasionally)
 - Green diarrhoea (one case)
 - Slight increase in mortality.
- All 13 holdings have been derestricted under the Avian Influenza Legislation as the H6N1 subtype is not included in the definition of a notifiable avian influenza at EU level.
- Recently confirmed cases remain restricted under Irish Law and are subject to compliance with certain requirements in order to prevent further disease spread.
- Culling of birds has occurred in the case of all the flocks – note this is a commercial decision on behalf of the flock owners.

LPAI H6N1- Ireland's avian influenza disease status is not affected.

Avian influenza is defined in EU law in and the OIE Terrestrial code for the purposes of notification, control, eradication and trade. Notifiable avian influenza includes all influenza A viruses of the H5 or H7 subtypes, whether they are low pathogenic or highly pathogenic. It also includes non H5 or H7 subtypes, provided they are classified as highly pathogenic following a specific testing regime set out in the legislation.

Under these rules the H6N1 subtype of avian influenza in this case is not deemed to be notifiable to the EU or the OIE as it is not a H5 or H7 subtype and testing has confirmed that it is not highly pathogenic (this is also supported by the clinical picture). **Therefore Ireland's Avian Influenza disease status is not affected by these outbreaks** and there is no legal requirement to cull affected flocks or to introduce the same high level controls required by other notifiable subtypes of avian influenza such as H5N8 or H5N1.

However, restrictions on the movement of poultry and poultry products onto and off the site are currently in place on recently affected holdings as a precautionary measure to mitigate against the spread of this disease to other locations.

Outbreaks in Northern Ireland

- There have been no further LPAI H6N1 outbreaks in Northern Ireland and the total number remains at 15.
- The last confirmed outbreak was the 22/03/2020.

3. Advice to flock owners

The spread of H5N8 in Europe, as well as the outbreaks of non notifiable avian influenza here continue to serve as a reminder to all stakeholders that vigilance is needed against avian influenza.

All flock owners should monitor their flocks closely for signs of disease and consult their private veterinarian or local Regional Veterinary Office if they have concerns. Note that the presenting signs for H6N1 can be relatively mild and **flocks presenting with any of the clinical signs of avian influenza should be reported to DAFM so that a full investigation can be carried out in order to rule out the presence of notifiable disease.**

Flock owners, particularly those located in the area affected by H6N1 and surrounding high density poultry areas (Monaghan, Cavan & Louth) should review their individual risk for avian influenza and ensure strict mitigating biosecurity measures are in place to prevent the disease spreading to their flocks.

4. Further information

For information on avian influenza clinical signs and biosecurity advice please see:

[DAFM - Avian Influenza \(Bird Flu\)](#)

[DAFM – Biosecurity Advice during high risk periods](#)

To contact DAFM regional offices:

[DAFM - Contact](#)

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