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Avian Influenza Outbreaks in Germany

Report Categories:

Poultry and Products

Pest/Disease Occurrences

Agriculture in the News

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Report Highlights:

Germany has reported an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) of the subtype H5N8 among wild birds in Schleswig-Holstein (North Germany) on Nov, 8 2016, followed by Baden-Wuerttemberg (North-West Germany) on Nov, 9 2016. The veterinary authorities placed restrictions on poultry establishments in the affected areas immediately. In addition, free-range birds and zoo animals are required to be kept indoors.

General Information:

Germany has reported an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) of the subtype H5N8 among wild birds in Schleswig-Holstein (North Germany) on Nov, 8 2016, followed by Baden-Wuerttemberg (North-West Germany) on Nov, 9 2016. The veterinary authorities placed restrictions on poultry establishments in the affected areas immediately. In addition, free-range birds and zoo animals are required to be kept indoors.

Over the last weekend, more than 100 dead waterfowl (tufted ducks, coots, gulls, geese, swans) had been found on the Great Plön Lake and smaller lakes. Several of these birds were first examined on Nov 7, 2016 at the State Laboratory of Schleswig-Holstein. The findings have been confirmed by the Friedrich Löffler Institute (FLI), the national reference laboratory.

The veterinary authorities have issued a directive on the control of avian influenza with a 3 km radius protection zone and a 7km surveillance zone around the outbreak location. In these areas the following restrictions should be applied: poultry must be kept indoors and must not be relocated (restricted area: 21 days; surveillance area: 15 days). The holdings in the restricted area shall have regular clinical evaluations of the taken samples. In addition, strict bio-security measures must be applied (cowshed hygiene, cleaning, disinfection).

The causative agent of the subtype H5N8 is currently being analyzed by the FLI in more detail. Currently there are no reported cases of humans infected with H5N8. According to the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, spreading of avian influenza (H5N8) through infected food is "theoretically possible, but unlikely."

So far, there have been no trade restrictions imposed by other countries.