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## Russian Federation

**Post:** Moscow

### Avian Influenza in Russia 2016-2017

**Report Categories:**

Agricultural Situation

Poultry and Products

Pest/Disease Occurrences

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**Report Highlights:**

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) began to affect Russian domestic and commercial flocks at the end of 2016. The earliest cases were identified as H5N8 serotype. However, the Russian Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) considers the later HPAI instances in Astrakhan, Rostov-on-Don, and Krasnodar to be a reoccurrence of a single strain of H5 and has not specified the exact virus serotype. Belarus and Kazakhstan have instituted temporary restrictions on imports from Russia following the outbreaks. After the HPAI outbreak in the United States in 2014, Russia imposed restrictions on the import and transit of all U.S. poultry-related products. These bans are still in place despite OIE recognition of the U.S. as an HPAI free country. Russia has also imposed several other bans on neighboring countries due to HPAI outbreaks.

## **Executive Summary:**

After eight years without significant occurrences of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in Russia, several cases of H5N1 were registered among wild birds in 2015, and then new outbreaks occurred in domestic and commercial flocks beginning at the end of 2016. The earliest of the 2016 cases were identified as H5N8 serotype. However, the Russian Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) considers the later HPAI instances in Astrakhan, Rostov-on-Don, and Krasnodar to be a reoccurrence of a single strain of H5 and has not specified the exact virus serotype. The Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Kazakhstan, both member states of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), restricted shipments of poultry related products from administrative regions of Russia affected by HPAI in December 2016 and January 2017. Russia imposed restrictions on the import of U.S. poultry meat and byproducts, live birds and hatching eggs, and finally transiting poultry related products through its territory in 2014-2015, and has not lifted these bans in spite of World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) recognition of the United States as a country free from HPAI. Russia has also imposed several other bans on neighboring countries due to HPAI outbreaks, but these were usually on a regional basis.

## **General Information:**

### **Current HPAI Situation in Russia**

The first large outbreak in a commercial flock occurred in early December 2016 in the broiler complex “Poultry farm Kharabalinskaya” in Astrakhan oblast. [Testing of pathological material](#) from the dead birds revealed HPAI subtype H5. According to the information notified to OIE, 649,000 birds died or were destroyed as a result.

The biggest Russian commercial turkey producer, “[EVRODON](#)”, in Rostov-on-Don oblast, imposed quarantine on the ground of HPAI, H5 serotype, outbreak on December 30, 2016. [Two affected flocks](#) totaling 160,000 birds have been destroyed. [Media reported](#) the company’s economic loss at one billion rubles (\$16.7 million).

In one of the latest notified incidence, local mass media [widely reported](#) a die-off of birds of different species in the Voronezh zoo that started on January 3, 2017. The local administration placed the zoo on quarantine from January 5 and then decided to [destroy all birds in the zoo](#). In its report to OIE, the Russian Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance Service (VPSS) claimed four deaths, different from previously reported on its web site in [an operative message](#) referencing the media reports.

Some recent HPAI outbreaks have not yet been notified to OIE. Local vets registered mass deaths of birds in backyard flocks in Peschanokopskiy, Tselinskiy, and Zernorgadskiy districts, Rostov oblast during the first week of January 2017. Veterinary specialists investigated, and [VPSS preliminarily recognized](#) the outbreaks as HPAI.

Table 1. HPAI outbreaks in the territory of Russia according to notifications to OIE

# by order	Species	Location, type of flock, number of died and destroyed birds	Date of detection	Date of report to OIE	AI serotype	Disease
1	Wild birds	Tyva Republic	June 9, 2016	June 17, 2016	H5N8	HPAI
2	“Birds” (goose, hen, guinea fowl)	Kalmykia Republic, backyards in two districts 42 and 95 deaths, 0 destroyed	Nov 7, 2016	Nov 23, 2016	H5N8	HPAI
3	Chicken	Astrakhan oblast, Commercial farm 7136 Deaths, 642,090 destroyed	Dec 2, 2016	Dec 8, 2016	H5	HPAI
4	Chicken	Krasnodar kray, backyard 74 deaths, 12 destroyed	Dec 8, 2016	Dec 19, 2016	H5	HPAI
5	Geese and ducks	Krasnodar kray, Commercial farm 601 Deaths, 0 destroyed	Dec 26, 2016	Jan 16, 2017	H5	HPAI
6	Turkey	Rostov oblast Commercial farm Yevrodon 10 755 Deaths, 160,613 destroyed	Dec 27, 2016	Jan 16, 2017	H5	HPAI
7	Turkey	Rostov oblast Commercial farm Yevrodon 2 1174 Deaths, 58,946 destroyed	Dec 27, 2016	Jan 16, 2017	H5	HPAI
8	Wild swan	Krasnodar kray Apsheron district, 84 Deaths	Jan 1, 2017	Jan 16, 2017	H5	HPAI
9	Wild swan	Krasnodar kray Temryuk district 38 Deaths	Jan 5, 2017	Jan 16, 2017	H5	HPAI
10	Zoo bird species	Voronezh oblast 4 Deaths	Jan 3, 2017	Jan 26, 2017	H5	HPAI
11	Chicken	Chechen Republic backyard 79 Deaths, 1 destroyed	Jan 8, 2017	Jan 26, 2017	H5	HPAI

Source: OIE Avian Influenza Portal

<http://www.oie.int/animal-health-in-the-world/update-on-avian-influenza/2016/>

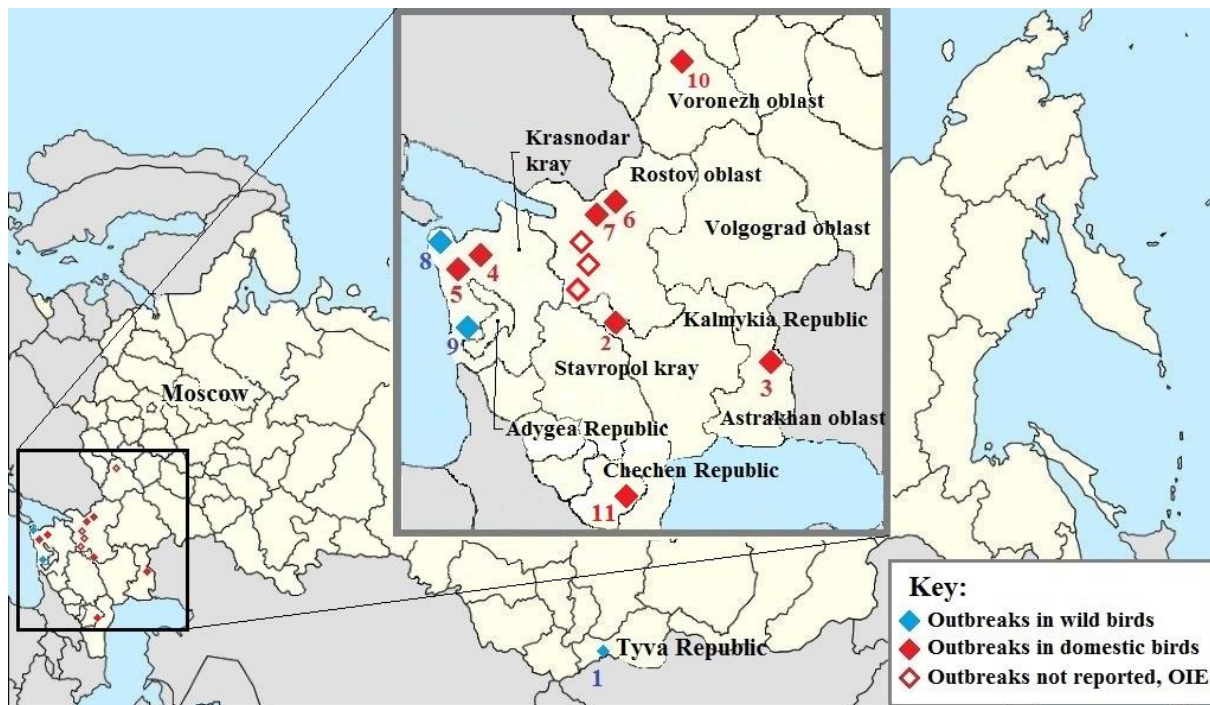


Chart 1. Location of HPAI outbreaks in the territory of the Russian Federation.  
Note: The enumeration of the reported outbreaks matches with those of Table 1.

Russia suffered significant HPAI outbreaks in poultry in 2005-2008. Following this, there were only isolated cases through 2014. Several cases of H5N1 were registered in Astrakhan oblast, Tyva Republic, Novosibirsk oblast, and Zabaykalskiy kray among wild birds in 2015. Russian veterinary authorities claim its biggest threat is H5N1 from China, where high mortality among wild birds has been recently registered, although H5N2 could move into Yakutia and Chukotka from North America. Vaccination against HPAI for 15-16 million birds per year continues in the most vulnerable regions of Russia.

The Russian veterinary service does not officially update the Russian population on veterinary diseases except through interviews to mass media. Some information about the epizootic situation in Russia is placed [on the VPSS website](#) with reference to other information sources, such as mass media, OIE, FAO, and territorial VPSS offices. On a quarterly and annual basis, VPSS publishes [reports on its epizootic situation](#) through its official research center, the All-Russian Research Institute for Animal Health Protection in Vladimir (ARRIAH).

### Trade restrictions on poultry exports from Russia

According to publications on the VPSS web site with reference to the information from VPSS territorial office of Sverdlov oblast, restrictions have been imposed on the export of poultry products from Kalmykia Republic and Astrakhan oblast ([publication of January 10, 2017](#)), and from Rostov oblast and Krasnodar kray ([publication of January 26, 2017](#)). Additionally, EAEU member states responded to the HPAI outbreaks in the Russian Federation. The veterinary service of the Republic of Belarus has

imposed HPAI-related temporary restrictions on the import of live birds, hatching eggs, wild, zoo and circus animals of susceptible species, poultry meat, egg powder, mélange, albumin and other food products derived from processing eggs, down and feather, feeds and feed additives made from birds, feeds of plant origin, hunting game trophies (wild fowl), as well as used equipment for transportation, maintenance, slaughtering and cutting of birds from Astrakhan oblast on December 13, 2016, Krasnodar kray on December 21, 2016, and Rostov oblast on January 7, 2017. The Committee of Veterinary Control and Surveillance of the Republic of Kazakhstan imposed a similar ban on the shipments of live birds, hatching eggs, and poultry related products from Astrakhan oblast and Kalmyk Republic on December 26, 2016.

### **Russian restrictions on the export of poultry related products from the U.S.**

Immediately following the detection of HPAI in the northwest United States in December 2014, VPSS imposed temporary restrictions on shipments from the whole territory of the U.S. of poultry meat and all kinds of poultry products that were not heat-treated (no less than 70 Centigrade), feeds and feed additives for birds (excepting for feed additives of chemical and microbiological synthesis), as well as used equipment for keeping, slaughtering and cutting birds, down and feathers. Also restricted were shipments of live birds and hatching eggs from the state of Washington. On May 26, 2015, VPSS expanded the HPAI-related temporary restrictions on the shipments of live birds and hatching eggs, except specific pathogen free (SPF) eggs, to include the whole territory of the U.S. The United States and Russia agreed in 2006 to only impose HPAI-related trade restrictions to those States in which an HPAI outbreak occurred in commercial flocks, in line with OIE guidelines.

Expressing a concern that all other member states of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) did not adopt the same restrictive measures imposed by Russia, thereby making the protections ineffective, [VPSS additionally suspended the transit](#) through the Russian Federation of live birds, poultry meat and products and hatching eggs, excepting for SPF eggs, from the entire U.S. territory starting June 10, 2015. All of these restrictions remain in place despite the fact that the outbreak in the United States has been eradicated.

On April 22, 2016, APHIS submitted to the OIE the declaration that the United States regained its freedom from HPAI. On August 9, 2016, USDA APHIS submitted to OIE the Final report on eradication of the LPAI H5N1 outbreak in Missouri. Now the U.S. is considered as AI free country. Meanwhile, despite these notifications and the “U.S. - Russia Coordinated Response to Avian Influenza” of 2006, Russia still has not lifted the restrictions related to the Avian Influenza.

### **Other Russian AI related bans in 2016**

- **Germany:** Restrictions were incrementally imposed on the shipments of live birds and hatching eggs from several regions of Germany between November 2016 and January 2017. Russia notified some of these measures to the WTO December 1, 2016.
- **France:** Restrictions were imposed on the shipments of live birds, hatching eggs, poultry meat and all kinds of poultry products not heat treated (less than 70 Centigrade), feeds and feed additives for birds (excepting for feed additives of plant origin, produced by chemical and

microbiological synthesis), used equipment for maintenance, slaughtering and cutting birds from several regions of France in October and December 2016.

- **The Netherlands:** Restrictions were imposed on the shipments of live birds and hatching eggs from several provinces in July, November and December, 2016. In addition, the transit of live birds from one municipality across the territory of the Russian Federation was suspended starting July 2016.
- **Serbia:** Restrictions were imposed on the shipments of live birds, hatching eggs, poultry meat and all kinds of poultry products not heat treated (less than 70 Centigrade), feeds and feed additives for birds (excepting for feed additives of plant origin, produced by chemical and microbiological synthesis), used equipment for maintenance, slaughtering and cutting birds from one region of Serbia on December 23, 2016.
- **United Kingdom:** Restrictions were imposed on the shipments of live birds and hatching eggs from several counties on February 23, 2016; December 23, 2016; January 13, 2017.
- **Sweden:** Restrictions were imposed on the shipments of live birds, hatching eggs, poultry meat and all kinds of poultry products not heat treated (less than 70 Centigrade), feeds and feed additives for birds (excepting for feed additives of plant origin, produced by chemical and microbiological synthesis), used equipment for maintenance, slaughtering and cutting birds from one territorial unit of Sweden on December 16, 2016.
- **Ukraine:** Restrictions were imposed on the shipments of live birds, hatching eggs, poultry meat and all kinds of poultry products not heat treated (less than 70 Centigrade), feeds and feed additives for birds (excepting for feed additives of plant origin, produced by chemical and microbiological synthesis), used equipment for maintenance, slaughtering and cutting birds from whole territory of Ukraine starting December 14, 2016. Russia notified this measure to the WTO December 16, 2016.
- **Poland:** Restrictions were imposed on the shipments of live birds, hatching eggs, poultry meat and all kinds of poultry products not heat treated (less than 70 Centigrade), feeds and feed additives for birds (except of plant origin, produced by chemical and microbiological synthesis), used equipment for maintenance, slaughtering and cutting birds from several territorial units of Poland in December 2016 and January 2017.

The Russian veterinary and phytosanitary surveillance service (VPSS) published [on its website on December 9, 2016](#), that VPSS can implement zoning (regionalization) of the territory of a foreign country in case of AI outbreak in order to specify regions safe for the shipments of poultry related products to the territory of Russia/EAEU. To start this process, VPSS requires a request from the competent authorities of the affected country. According to the publication, this new option aims to support international trade and the implementation of Russia's international duties while protecting the territory of the Russian Federation.