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Avian Influenza Makes Guangdong Province Introducing New Restrictions on Poultry Markets

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Report Highlights:

As Guangdong is entering into winter and spring, a new series of outbreak of avian influenza is looming in the province with one death case reported. The local government introduced new procedures hoping to educate consumers refraining from buying live poultry.

General Information:

On January 11th, 2015, Guangdong confirmed two new cases of human infected by H7N9 in Shenzhen and Dongguan. Both of the patients, aged 42 and 52, are under critical conditions.

In Zhaoqing of Guangdong, a 56 years old man was confirmed positive to H7N9 on January 7th, 2015. It was reported that he had chronic diseases and just returned from his Fujian home town one day prior. Due to complication of symptoms, he was announced to be dead on January 9th by the local government. Zhaoqing government has asked live poultry wholesale markets to sanitize every day, to clean once a week and to close once a month with zero poultry on the market overnight.

In Shenzhen, a six year old girl was reported to contract H7N9 on January 5th, 2015. She is currently under isolation care. In addition, a 35 years old woman from the same city is in serious condition after confirming of H7N9 on December 29, 2014. Shenzhen government said live poultry wholesale markets had been shut down for a week since December 31, 2014.

In Dongguan, a 36 years old male was confirmed with the virus of H7N9 on January 6th and is in critical condition.

There isn't a human case of H7N9 reported yet from Zhongshan, but government official said virus were found in every live poultry wholesale market. It is just a matter of time when a human case will be detected.

In Fujian, there were six cases of human cases of avian influenza H7N9 confirmed in December 2014. Xiamen announced that live poultry sales to be suspended starting from January 12th for the preventing of H7N9 virus from spreading.

Among live chicken supplied to Hong Kong, H7 virus was detected and traced back to the farm in Huizhou. Hong Kong government stops importing live chicken for 21 days from the region.

Impacts to the local poultry industry

Guangdong Agricultural Department claimed RMB 10 billion (\$1.6 billion) lost due to avian influenza in 2014. Government officials said that the first fourth months of a year are normally the peak time for outbreak of avian influenza. Guangdong has not yet recovered from last year's lost, prices and numbers of poultry sold were at a low level. From January to September 2014, Guangdong sold and slaughtered some 645,335,700 poultry, drop 9.6 per cent from same period of previous year. 245,400 tons of eggs were produced, decreased by 1.3 percent from 2013.

To better manage risks, the Guangdong Poultry Operation and Management Guidelines will be effective on January 15th, 2015. These guidelines require Pearl River Delta cities and all highly populated cities in Guangdong to implement centralized-slaughter, cold chain distribution, and sale in chilled condition. According the new guidance, there will be no more new poultry wholesale market approved, no live



poultry will be allowed to leave the wholesale market (has to be slaughtered by a centralized plant), all unsold poultry will have to be slaughtered the same day, with no overnight stocks on the market. Trading on a closed day of the wholesale market is forbidden and violators will be facing a fine up to RMB 50,000 (\$8,200).



The culture and habits of Guangdong consumers who prefer to buy live poultry and consume freshly slaughtered poultry present a challenge to the implementation of these new restrictions on poultry market.