

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY
USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT
POLICY

Voluntary Public

Date: 12/22/2011

GAIN Report Number: HK1154

Hong Kong

Post: Hong Kong

H5N1 Found in Chicken Wholesale Market

Report Categories:

Agriculture in the News

Poultry and Products

Approved By:

Erich Kuss

Prepared By:

Caroline Yuen

Report Highlights:

A chicken carcass sample taken from the wholesale poultry market in Hong Kong tested positive for the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza virus during regular surveillance leading to the slaughtering of 17,000 head of chicken in the wholesale market on December 21, 2011. The Hong Kong government (HKG) also instituted a series of measures to stop the possible spreading of the virus. In the coming 21 days, local farms are not allowed to dispatch chickens to market and chicken imports from China will be suspended. The HKG is tracing the source of the chicken carcass.

H5N1 Found in Wholesale Poultry Market

A chicken carcass sample taken from the wholesale poultry market on December 20, 2011 tested positive for the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza virus during regular surveillance. The Hong Kong Government (HKG) is tracing the source of the chicken carcass. It is not certain at this stage whether the chicken came from local farm or was imported.

After the detection of H5N1 case, the HKG already inspected all local farms and liaised with its counterparts in mainland China. It reported that no abnormality had been detected so far in both local farms and supplying farms in China.

In response to the confirmation of H5N1 case in the wholesale poultry market, the HKG decided to implement a series of measures to prevent the spread of the virus and to protect public health.

Measures include the following:

(1) All poultry in the wholesale market totaling 17,000 head will be culled on the morning of December 21. The wholesale market will be closed until January 12, 2012.

(2) Local farms are stopped from dispatching chickens to the market for 21 days. Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) will also step up inspection on local farms and collect more samples for tests so as to monitor if any of the local farms is infected.

(3) Imports of live poultry including day-old chicks will be suspended for 21 days.

(4) The HKG will also step up inspection of the hygienic condition of poultry retail outlets. Retailers will be requested to thoroughly clean and disinfect outlets to prevent the virus from growing and accumulating in the environment. (Prohibition of overnight stocking of live poultry at all retail outlets has been implemented since 2008. As such, no live poultry was kept after 8pm on December 21, 2011 at all retail outlets.)

(5) On the health side, doctors and hospitals are requested to be vigilant on any suspected human cases of H5N1.

(6) Biosecurity measures in bird parks will be strengthened.

With the implementation of these measures, Hong Kong will not have any supply of live poultry for 21 days. Hong Kong has a daily supply of about 18,000 live chickens. There are a total of 30 chicken farms in Hong Kong accounting for about 61 percent of total supply with the remaining 39 percent relying on imports from China.