

IEC Member Update on HPAI - July 22nd

Four Human Cases of H5N1 Confirmed in US

Earlier in July, **HPAI was detected** on a **Colorado egg farm** in the US, which has been presumptively linked to the dairy strain found on dairy farms in Colorado.

Several workers responsible for the depopulation and disposal at the farm **exhibited mild symptoms** that could be related to avian influenza (AI), including conjunctivitis and common respiratory infection symptoms.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) informed the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), which came to the farm to **test both contract workers and farm employees**.

Four contract workers on that farm have **tested positive for H5N1**, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and a fifth worker is a presumed-positive case yet to be confirmed at CDC. None of the patients required hospitalisation, and **symptom monitoring, testing and treatment** are being provided at the farm.

Since then, a **second egg farm nearby** has had a **positive HPAI finding**, and similar involvement is expected from government and public health authorities to check for human cases.

This is a **troubling development for our industry**, and it is a firm reminder that efforts to keep this disease off our farms through **stringent biosecurity** measures must remain at the highest levels.



Further, it is critical to ensure that everyone who is in contact with possibly infected flocks can access **personal protective equipment (PPE)**, including eyewear, gloves, coveralls and masks. The obligation of farms experiencing a HPAI detection to **protect their employees and contract workers** has never been greater.

The number of **HPAI cases in dairy herds** continues to **rapidly increase**. As of 17 July 2024, **152 positive herds in 13 US states** have been reported, and several of the **egg farms** with recent detections are **linked presumptively** to the specific dairy strain of HPAI.

This shows a **new risk pathway for infection** of commercial birds, via direct and indirect contact with the dairy industry. To date, any virus from dairy cattle **retains full pathogenicity for birds** just like those originating from wild birds or domestic poultry.

Earlier this year, **four human H5 cases** in the US were reported following **exposure to dairy cows**.

Finland Initiates AI Vaccination for Poultry Workers

Finland will be the first EU country to **offer vaccinations to people** who may be **exposed to AI**, including poultry workers. It will use a **vaccine** that has been **jointly procured at the EU level**, produced by pharmaceutical company **CSL Seqirus**.

Although **no HPAI infections** have been detected in humans in Finland, and therefore the **threat to the general population remains low**, it is important to protect people at higher risk, such as poultry and mink farm workers and veterinarians.



The European Commission has secured a **contract for up to 665,000 pre-pandemic vaccine doses**, with an option to acquire an additional 40 million doses over the contract's four-year term if necessary. This vaccine is currently the **only authorised preventive zoonotic AI vaccine in the EU**, and the contract enables member states to purchase doses as required.