

Current situation on the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza (Annex)

(07/01) In **Germany**, an outbreak of avian influenza (subtype H5N1) was officially detected in the district of Steinburg in Schleswig-Holstein on 7 February 2024. A farm with 3,500 turkeys is affected.

According to the latest information from the EU Commission, a total of 173 outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) were confirmed in poultry flocks in 15 EU Member States between 1 October 2023 and 2 February 2024. Almost 5.28 million were affected, most of them in Hungary (30 %), followed by Bulgaria (25 %), Poland (10 %), Germany (9 %) and France (8.5). According to the EU Commission, the following third countries have currently imposed import bans on EU poultry due to HPAI outbreaks:

- **Country-wide bans:**

the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, China, Japan, South Africa, Morocco, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates

- **Regionalisation accepted** (either for all Member States or to some Member States – either for all or some products):

Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, the United Arab Emirates, North Macedonia, Turkey, Thailand and Japan

On 9 February, the Friedrich Loeffler Institute (FLI) published an updated risk assessment for highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), which we have attached to this circular. For **Germany**, the risk of HPAI H5 entries in domestic poultry holdings and bird populations in zoological facilities through direct and indirect contact with wild birds is still classified as high by the FLI for February, as reports of wild bird cases continue to be frequent. The risk of the entry, spread and further spread of HPAI H5 viruses in waterfowl populations in connection with high waterfowl densities at gathering sites within Germany is also still classified as **high**.

In January, nine HPAI outbreaks were detected in domestic poultry in Germany. Affected were laying hen farms (n=4), private holdings (n=4) as well as a turkey fattening herd. In **Europe**, the number of HPAI outbreaks in domestic poultry in January (52, excluding Germany) was similar to the previous two months. Various sectors of poultry production were affected. While Hungary was particularly affected in December 2023, the Republic of Moldova had the highest number of outbreaks in January (n=18), all in small-scale farms. France reported, among other things, two outbreaks in vaccinated fattening duck farms. In one case, the fattening ducks had only been vaccinated once, in the other case they had already been vaccinated twice, but the last time about 7 weeks before the outbreak. The USA, Canada, Thailand and Japan have issued a ban on the import of ducks and duck products, some of which apply to countries throughout the EU. In January, Ukraine (n=5), the Czech Republic (n=13), Slovakia (n=1) and Austria (n=2) reported outbreaks in captive birds. Most of these were at private chicken farms.

Worldwide, outbreaks in domestic poultry and wild bird cases caused by HPAI viruses (subtype H5) continued to be reported to the WOAHA in January, especially in Asia and the North American continent. Cases and outbreaks in South America have probably declined sharply due to climate (it is summer in the southern hemisphere). From Africa, Ghana reported an outbreak in domestic poultry from the Western Region at the end of January. Over 22,000 birds had to be killed. In Southeast Asia, dozens of H5N1 outbreaks in domestic poultry and cases in wild birds have been detected in Taiwan, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Japan and South Korea. South Korea continued to report outbreaks of HPAI (subtype H5N6) in domestic poultry. In the colder regions of North America (USA and Canada), some outbreaks in poultry have been reported for January; in Canada, four outbreaks in Nova Scotia, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Quebec; in the U.S., 13 outbreaks in domestic poultry and 13 outbreaks in private holdings in five states. In total, the losses amount to over 2 million animals in January.

On 15 January 2024, the European Commission published Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/580 in the EU Official Journal L concerning emergency measures in relation to outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza in certain Member States following the recent HPAI outbreaks in **Bulgaria** (in Plovdiv region), **Denmark** (in Aabenraa, Slagelse and Sorø municipalities), **Germany** (in the Hesse, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Schleswig-Holstein states), **Hungary** (in Győr-Moson-Sopron county), **Poland** (in Greater Poland, Łódź, Lublin and Lubusz Voivodeships) and in **Slovakia** (in Bratislava, Nitra and Trnava Regions).

In addition, **Croatia** has notified the Commission of an outbreak of HPAI in an establishment where poultry were kept, located in Brod-Posavina county. Moreover, **Czechia** has notified the Commission of outbreaks of HPAI in establishments where poultry were kept, located in Pardubice and Vysočina regions.

Furthermore, one of the outbreaks confirmed by Denmark is located in close proximity to the border with Germany. Accordingly, the competent authorities of those two Member States have duly collaborated with regard to the establishment of the necessary surveillance zone, as the surveillance zone extends into the territory of Germany. In addition, one of the outbreaks confirmed by Slovakia is located in close proximity to the border with Hungary. Accordingly, the competent authorities of those two Member States have duly collaborated with regard to the establishment of the necessary protection and surveillance zones, as the protection and surveillance zones extend into the territory of Hungary.

The annex to the decision (EU) 2024/580 contains the updated territorial outlines of the protection and surveillance zones as well as the provisional duration of the protective measures.

Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/580, which has now been published, amends Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2447 accordingly. Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/580 is available at the following link: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2024/580/oj

Amendment to the lists of third countries for imports of poultry commodities from the United States

(07/02) Annexes V and XIV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/404 as regards the entries for the United States in the lists of third countries authorised for the entry into the Union of consignments of poultry, germinal products of poultry, and fresh meat and meat products from poultry and game birds has been amended again in relation to highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). The corresponding Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/579 has been published in the Official Journal L on 12 February 2024.

The **United States** have notified the Commission of three further outbreaks of HPAI in poultry in the states of Indiana, Kansas and South Dakota, which were confirmed between 22 and 25 January 2024. With the implementing regulation that has now been published, the EU Commission has suspended the entry into the Union of consignments of poultry, germinal products of poultry, and fresh meat of poultry and game birds from those areas mentioned in the United States.

Annexes V and XIV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/404 were amended accordingly to take account of the current epidemiological situation as regards HPAI in the United States. Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/579 entered into force on 13 February 2024 and is available at the following link: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/579/oj

Current situation on African swine fever

(07/03) In January, the number of cases of African swine fever (ASF) in wild boar in Europe fell compared to the previous month, reports the German Friedrich-Loeffler-Institute (FLI). However, the number of cases in Europe is generally at a seasonally high level. Most cases were reported by **Poland** (206), followed by **Italy** (156), **Latvia** (103), **Lithuania** (86), **Hungary** (69), **Romania** (68) and **Bulgaria** (65). In

Germany, ASF was detected in 13 wild boars, all from the district of Bautzen in Saxony. In **Montenegro**, ASF was detected for the first time in January. Two dead wild boars were affected, which were found only about 500 metres from the border with Bosnia-Herzegovina. In northern **Greece**, five wild boars were detected.

Norway wants to prevent the introduction of African swine fever (ASF) at all costs. The government had decided in autumn last year that the wild boars should be exterminated in the country. Now, the Food Safety Authority and the Environment Agency have presented a revised action plan for the killing of wild boars. In addition to the continuation of the measures already implemented, they propose several new ones. Among other things, they recommend more intensive monitoring of wild boar populations, higher shooting premiums for hunters and to enable the sale of meat of the wild boars that have been shot. In addition, the government is said to be considering the construction of a game fence on the border with Sweden to protect commercial pig farming. The outbreak of African swine fever in wild boars in Sweden in September 2023 has significantly fuelled fears of the virus being introduced to Norway.

Use of digital proofs of origin for products originating from Brazil (Annex)

(07/04) As of 1 March 2023, Brazil issues those certificates of origin in digital format, contrary to what is laid down in Annex 22-14 to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/2447. As reported on 27 July 2023 in EPEGA Circular No. 30, the EU Commission had presented a corresponding draft amendment to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/761 to enable the use of certificates of origin issued in digital form. Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/567, published in Official Journal L on 15 February, now provides for a derogation from Article 57(1) of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/2447 to allow the use of certificates of origin issued in digital form.

In order to continue to ensure the authenticity of the proof of origin, a model digital certificate of origin was defined in the Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/761.

In order to ensure that the proof of origin stays authentic, a template of a digital certificate should be provided for in Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/761.

Release into free circulation of products accompanied by those digital certificates remains subject to the provisions of Articles 57, 58 and 59 of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/2447.

In addition, the recently published Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/567 reduces the Member States' notification obligations to the EU Commission and amends Article 16 of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/761 accordingly.

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/567 enters into force on 22 February 2024. We have attached the regulation to this circular.

Ban on antimicrobial medicinal products - amendment to model veterinary certificates

(07/05) On 12 February, Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/399 amending Annex III to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2235 and Annex II to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/403 as regards model certificates for the entry into the Union of consignments of certain products of animal origin and certain categories of animals have been published in the Official Journal L.

Among other things the following model certificates in Annex III to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2235 are to be amended:

Chapter 1 (model "BOV"), Chapter 2 (model "OVI"), Chapter 3 (model "POR"), Chapter 4 (model "EQU"), Chapter 5 (model "RUF"), Chapter 7 (model "SUF"), Chapter 10 (model "RUM-MSM"), Chapter 11 (model "SUI-MSM"), Chapter 12 (model "NZ-TRANSIT-SG"), Chapter 13 (model "POU") Chap-

ter 15 (model “RAT”), Chapter 19 (model “E”), Chapter 20 (model “EP”), Chapter 23 (model “RM”), Chapter 24 (model “MP-PREP”), Chapter 25 (model “MPNT”) and Chapter 26 (model “MPST”). The background for the amendment of the health certificates of these models is to take into account the provisions of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/905 with regard to the application of the prohibition of the use of certain antimicrobial medicinal products in animals or products of animal origin exported from third countries to the Union.

In addition, the following model certificates in Annex II of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/403 are to be amended:

Chapter 1 (model “BOV-X”), Chapter 2 (model “BOV-Y”), Chapter 4 (model “OV/CAP-X”), Chapter 5 (model “OV/CAP-Y”), Chapter 7 (model “SUI-X”), Chapter 8 (model “SUI-Y”), Chapter 12 (model “CAM-CER”), Chapter 13 (model “EQUI-X”), Chapter 14 (model “EQUI -Y”) Chapter 23 (model “BPP”), Chapter 24 (model “BPR”), Chapter 30 (model “SP”), Chapter 31 (model “SR”) and Chapter 32 (model “POU-LT20”).

The background for the amendment of the safety certificates of these models is to take into account the provisions of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/905 with regard to the application of the prohibition of use of certain antimicrobial medicinal products in relation to animals or products of animal origin exported from third countries to the Union.

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/399 enters into force on the twentieth day after its publication in the Official Journal and therefore on 3 March 2024 and shall apply from 3 September 2024. It is available at the following link: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/399/oj

Global market for poultry meat is likely to grow more strongly again

(07/06) In a recent analysis, the Dutch Rabobank assesses the outlook for the global poultry market in 2024 as cautiously optimistic. Rabobank's agricultural experts expect market conditions to gradually improve compared to 2023, with global poultry meat production increasing between 1.5% and 2.0%. That would be more than the 1.1% in the previous year, but less than the long-term average of 2.5%. With pork and beef expected to decline, poultry is expected to be the only major segment with some momentum in the global animal protein market in 2024, which is expected to grow by only 0.4% overall. In particular, lower feed costs are expected to allow for lower poultry meat prices, which is expected to boost consumption in 2024. The market is also likely to be supported by lower inflation and purchasing power growth.

The highest production growth is expected in Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Latin America, but at a below-average level in a longer-term comparison. Analysts warn of oversupply; this could have a significant impact on profitability, as happened in Brazil, the US and South Africa at the beginning of 2023. On the cost side, the experts expect feed prices to fall, but caution that this will also depend on geopolitical developments and weather conditions. Avian influenza is also a risk factor for production and trade.

International trade in poultry meat lost momentum in 2023, with less demand for processed goods in particular. Rabobank classifies the outlook for 2024 as restrained. Exports from Eastern Europe, and Russia in particular, are expected to continue to increase due to price competitiveness. Rabobank also expects Ukraine to try to further expand its exports, especially to Europe. Sales opportunities for higher-value processed goods are estimated to be weaker than for raw meat, but sales of these products should recover if the economic situation improves, and prices are lower. Avian influenza remains a Damocles sword. Rabobank sees the unrest in the Middle East as another potential disruptive factor, as the region is a major importer of poultry meat.

On Europe, bank analysts noted that the market deteriorated in the fourth quarter of 2023 due to rising supply and sluggish demand. The prices for breast meat in particular have come under pressure. The outlook for the EU poultry industry in 2024 is expected to be more challenging than in the previous two

years. Although the overall supply of meat in Europe is expected to decline due to lower pork production, rising imports are likely to put pressure on the margins of poultry meat producers in the EU. In addition, avian influenza could pose problems for the entire industry in the coming months. On a positive note, however, poultry remains highly popular with European consumers, especially as pork and beef are likely to remain expensive. Recommendations include moderating the growth in supply and focussing on cost efficiency and biosecurity.

Annexes:

- FLI – Risk assessment HPAI, Status 09/02/2024
- Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/567 – Digital proof of origin for products from Brazil

Imprint

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