

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

(08/01) According to the Animal Disease Information System ([TSIS](#)), there are currently 18 active cases of HPAI in kept animals (as of 22 February 2024). In wild animals, 42 cases are currently classified as "active". Numerous third countries have responded to the HPAI outbreak with trade restrictions. The Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) summarises these restrictions in an "HPAI restricted list" for the sake of clarity. Please find attached the latest communication from the BMEL on updating the restricted list, which we also sent out on 20 February 2024.

## **CSRD - Sustainability reporting**

(08/02) Almost every company today is confronted with the keyword EGS (Environmental, Social and Governance). Even with CSRD, companies no longer have to account only for their finances, but also for environmental or social aspects. The BGA, the umbrella organisation of EPEGA, is organising a webinar on this topic in cooperation with Creditreform on 15 March 2024 from 13:00 to 14:30 to provide an introduction to the topic. Registration is possible via the following link: <https://eveeno.com/bga-csrd>

The webinar will be held in English.

## **USA on the verge of a breakthrough with avian flu vaccine?**

(08/03) According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 81 million poultry and waterfowl have died or had to be culled from avian influenza in 47 US states since January 2022.

According to media reports, US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack told a congressional hearing in February that his department was probably about 18 months away from finding a vaccine that would be effective for the current strain of avian flu. The US Department of Agriculture plans to discuss the vaccination of poultry with trading partners. There are concerns that other countries may restrict imports of vaccinated US poultry, Mr Vilsack said.

The World Organisation for Animal Health declared in May that governments should consider vaccination against avian flu for poultry. This is to prevent the virus from spreading into a pandemic. The US government itself declared last year that France's decision to vaccinate ducks against bird flu would lead to import restrictions on French poultry.

**Austria - demand for quality grading system, measures against "imported animal suffering"** (08/04) Austria's agricultural sector is starting a "transparency offensive" when it comes to animal production. The aim is to create a certified and independently controlled system of quality levels for animal products. This "quality level system" is intended to increase consumer choice when shopping, win them over in favour of greater animal welfare and improve the income basis of domestic farming families. Following intensive discussions, all the major livestock farming associations under the umbrella of Nutztierhaltung Österreich (NTÖ) and all the presidents of the chambers of agriculture have now agreed on this approach.

On 7 February 2024, the Austrian Chamber of Agriculture presented the conditions for the new quality level system in the form of a 7-point plan. The central point is the implementation of a form of husbandry

labelling, which should always be linked to quality and origin. The proposal is to categorise animal husbandry into a 5-stage system. According to this system, goods from the livestock sector would then be explicitly labelled. In a second step, the plan is to include all products, including processing, and to implement the quality level system in all food retail distribution channels. Agrarmarkt Austria (AMA) is to serve as a common platform for all these projects with its quality seal. There are also calls for the establishment of a system with a direct say for agriculture.

Against this background, the recently publicised abuses in imported poultry meat should be prevented.

### **Amendment to the lists of third countries for imports of poultry commodities from Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States**

(08/05) Annexes V and XIV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/404 as regards the entries for Canada, the United Kingdom and the USA in the lists of third countries from which entry into the Union of consignments of poultry, germinal products of poultry and fresh meat and meat products of poultry and wild feathered game is authorised have been amended again in relation to highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). The corresponding Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/748 was published in the Official Journal L on 23 February 2024.

Canada has notified the Commission of four outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in poultry in the provinces of Alberta, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Quebec that were confirmed between 30 January 2024 and 9 February 2024.

The United Kingdom has notified the Commission of an outbreak of HPAI in poultry in the county of Yorkshire, England, which was confirmed on 14 February 2024.

The United States has notified the Commission of four outbreaks of HPAI in poultry in the states of Colorado, Florida, Nebraska and North Dakota, which were confirmed between 6 February 2024 and 9 February 2024.

With the above-mentioned Implementing Regulation, the EU Commission has suspended the entry into the Union of consignments of poultry, germinal products of poultry and fresh meat of poultry and wild feathered game from the above-mentioned areas in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States. In addition, Canada and the United States have provided the Commission with updated information on the disease situation with regard to HPAI in their territories which led to the suspension of the entry into the Union of certain products, as set out in Annexes V and XIV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/404. The Commission has assessed the information submitted by Canada and the United States and considers that it has provided adequate guarantees that the animal health situation which led to the suspension of the entry into the Union of consignments of certain products from the concerned zones in those third countries, as set out in Annexes V and XIV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/404, does not present a risk to public or animal health, no longer poses a risk to public or animal health in the Union and that, consequently, the entry into the Union of those consignments from the affected zones of Canada and the United States from which entry into the Union has been suspended should be authorised again. Annexes V and XIV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/404 have been amended accordingly to take into account the current epidemiological situation with regard to HPAI in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States. Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/748 enters into force on 23 February 2024 and is available at the following link: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L\\_202400748](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202400748)

#### **Annexes:**

- Overview of lockdowns due to AI\_HPAI, as at 20 February 2024

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