

## Current situation on the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza

(20/01) In the United States, another person has tested positive for bird flu after coming into contact with cows. This is the second human infection in connection with the current outbreak among dairy cows in several states, according to the CDC. The infected person is an employee of a dairy farm in the US state of Michigan, where the virus has been detected in cows. The infected person had symptoms in his eyes similar to conjunctivitis and an eye swab gave a positive test result, according to the health authority. The new infection does not change the fact that the risk of bird flu for humans in the USA is considered to be low.

The H5N1 virus was first discovered in dairy cows in the USA at the end of March. According to the US Department of Agriculture, the cows were probably infected by wild birds. By 8 May, the number of cattle herds infected with the H5N1 virus in the USA had increased to 42 across 10 states. At the beginning of April, the US authorities reported a positive case in a person in the state of Texas. The person had previously had contact with dairy cows in which the highly pathogenic H5N1 virus was suspected. The US authorities assume that this was probably the first human infection via a cow.

On 21 May 2024, the European Commission published Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1452 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 the oblasts of Chaskovo and Plovdiv). The annex to the decision (EU) 2024/1452 contains the updated territorial outlines of the protection and surveillance zones as well as the provisional duration of the protective measures.

Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1452, which has now been published, amends Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2447 accordingly. Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1452 is available at the following link: [http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec\\_impl/2024/1452/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2024/1452/oj)

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

(20/02) 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) 2024/1453 has been published in the Official Journal L on 21 May 2024.

The **United States** have notified the Commission of six outbreaks of HPAI in poultry in the states of California (1), Idaho (1), Michigan (3) and Minnesota (1), which were confirmed between 24 April and 10 May 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 that area mentioned in the United States.

Moreover, the **United States** have submitted updated information on the epidemiological situation in relation to 11 outbreaks of HPAI in a poultry establishments the states of California (3), Colorado (1), Indiana (1), Nebraska (1), North Carolina (1), North Dakota (1), Ohio (1) and Oregon (2), which were confirmed between 20 October 2023 and 20 February 2024.

The Commission has evaluated the information submitted by the United States. The Commission considers that the United States have provided appropriate guarantees that the animal health situation that gave

rise to the suspension, no longer represents a threat to animal or public health within the Union, and that, consequently, the entry into the Union of poultry commodities from the concerned zones of the United States from which entry into the Union had been suspended, should be reauthorised.

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) 2024/1453 entered into force on 22 May 2024 and is available at the following link: [http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg\\_impl/2024/1453/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/1453/oj)

### **Current situation on African swine fever**

(20/03) The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published the latest annual epidemiological report on African swine fever (ASF). The report is available at the following link: <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/8809>. According to the report, the ASF situation in Germany improved in 2023 and the number of confirmed cases in wild boar decreased. This was also the case in Hungary and Slovakia, while the highly contagious animal disease was detected for the first time in Sweden and Croatia in 2023. In addition, after a break of two years, cases were also confirmed again in Greece and in other regions of Italy that were previously free of ASF. A total of 14 EU member states reported ASF cases last year, with the number of cases in wild boar increasing by 10% compared to the previous year. In domestic pigs, 2023 even saw the highest number of cases since 2014.

EFSA also published a study (<https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/en-8776>) showing that the ASF virus survives in feed, bedding materials and mechanical vectors. The potential role of such vectors in virus transmission was also determined. The virus was stable at low temperatures for several days or even weeks on animal feed, especially on beet and potatoes. Grass, grass silage and maize silage, on the other hand, did not allow the virus to be re-isolated at any time. In arthropods, the virus was generally detectable over a certain period of time. However, this was dependent on the temperature and the quantity ingested. In stable flies, however, the virus could be detected for more than 168 hours at cool temperatures, which was significantly longer than the scientists had assumed. However, feeding trials carried out did not lead to infection of the pigs with ASF. According to the EFSA, the significance of this proof-of-concept study is limited.

On 21 May, Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1454 laying down specific control measures for African swine fever (ASF) and amending Annex I and II to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 was published in the Official Journal L. Previously, there had been new outbreaks of ASF in wild porcine animals in **Italy**. In addition, the epidemiological situation in certain zones listed as restricted zones I and II in **Czechia** in Annex I to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 has improved as regards wild porcine animals, due to the disease control measures being applied by that Member State in accordance with Union legislation.

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1454 is available at the following link: [http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg\\_impl/2024/1454/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/1454/oj)

### **Committee for the Common Organisation of the Agricultural Markets (Annex)**

(20/04) The most recent meeting of the joint management committee for animal products took place on Thursday, 23 May. The agenda includes inter alia the market situation in the egg and poultry sector. The next meeting of the Common Management Committee is expected to take place on 20 June 2024.

The presentation on the situation on the EU-poultry meat market was provided by the Commission and is attached and also available on the EPEGA homepage under the following link: [http://intranet.epega.org/meta\\_downloads/96845/EU\\_market\\_situation\\_poultry-May\\_2024.pdf](http://intranet.epega.org/meta_downloads/96845/EU_market_situation_poultry-May_2024.pdf)

### **Audit report Poland**

(20/05) The audit of Poland took place from 1 to 8 December 2023 and was undertaken as part of the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety's audit programme. The objectives of the audit were to confirm the appropriateness of the competent authorities' controls required by Article 123 of Regulation (EU) 2019/6 of the European Parliament and of the Council. The audit focused solely on controls on certain provisions concerning antimicrobial veterinary medicinal products.

Overall, the report concludes that appropriate controls are not in place to verify compliance with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2019/6 that aim to tackle antimicrobial resistance via a more prudent use of antimicrobials. The report contains recommendations to the competent authorities aimed at rectifying the shortcomings identified and at enhancing the implementation of control measures. It is available at the following link: <https://ec.europa.eu/food/audits-analysis/audit-report/details/4754>

### **Annex:**

- EU market situation poultry, May 2024

### **Imprint**

Editor: European Poultry, Egg and Game Association (EPEGA),

Am Weidendamm 1A, DE 10117 Berlin

Manager: Christine Amling/Sebastian Werren

Tel.: +49 30 590099-562, E-Mail: [info@epega.org](mailto:info@epega.org), Internet: <http://www.epega.org>

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