

Current situation on the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza

(28/01) In the United States, further bird flu cases have been detected in humans. Four new infections were confirmed in the state of Colorado on 12 July, the US health authority CDC reported. In another presumably positive case, the final test result is still pending. All those affected are agricultural workers who helped to eliminate animals in a poultry farm where the H5N1 virus had broken out. As testing continues, even more cases could become known, the authority said. According to the authority, this is the first proven transmission of the virus from birds directly to humans in the United States since April 2022.

Colorado is among the states most affected by the virus, with at least 36 H5N1 outbreaks on dairy farms. In addition, an outbreak was reported just last week at a large laying hen farm in Weld County with 1.78 million chickens. In total, there have been seven HPAI outbreaks in laying hen farms in the United States this year in the states of Michigan, Texas, Montana, Iowa and Colorado, with a total of over 15.8 million animals.

In recent months, four cases of bird flu in humans after contact with dairy cows have been detected in the United States, one of them also in the state of Colorado. The U.S. Department of Agriculture suspected that the cows had been infected by wild birds. A CDC team is on the ground in Colorado and is conducting further investigations into the outbreaks in poultry and dairy farms, the authority said. According to current knowledge, the risk to the population remains low. However, the cases underlined the risk of infection for humans if they came into contact with infected animals.

Like the flu in humans, bird flu is caused by influenza A viruses, but by other subtypes. The largest bird flu wave ever documented is currently raging, stretching over almost the entire world. However, health experts warn of the danger that the virus adapts to humans and can then also be transmitted from person to person.

Current situation on African swine fever

(28/02) In June, the number of cases of African swine fever (ASF) in wild boars did not change significantly, as the Friedrich Loeffler Institute (FLI) currently reports. In **Germany**, 39 cases were reported, more cases than in recent months, which, according to the FLI, is certainly also related to the new affected area in Hesse. A total of 16 cases were reported from Brandenburg, 15 from Saxony and seven cases from Hesse (Groß-Gerau district). In **Poland** (182) and **Italy** (146), there were slightly more ASF cases in wild boars in June than in the previous month, with most cases reported in Italy from the northern, already affected area. In **Sweden**, there was another positive find. In **Estonia**, positive tested wild boars have been discovered near the border with Latvia for the first time this year. In both **Latvia** (76) and **Lithuania** (86), wild boar cases occurred throughout the country.

In domestic pigs, on the other hand, the number of ASF outbreaks in Europe increased significantly in June. The sharp increase in domestic pig outbreaks is in line with the picture of recent years, in which a clear seasonality could be observed in affected countries. Countries where there have been no outbreaks for a long time are also affected this month. After 15 months, **Germany** reported another outbreak in a fattening farm with about 3,600 pigs. The company is not far from the Polish and Brandenburg borders. An additional outbreak in domestic pigs was reported from Hesse on 8 June 2024. Outbreaks were also reported in June from **Latvia** (3) and **Lithuania** (1), where there have been no outbreaks for almost a year. **Poland** (12) reported cases in domestic pigs for the first time in several months this month, with five smaller and seven larger farms with over 100 animals affected. The operations are located in both the

western and eastern ASF areas. According to the FLI, **Romania** (20), **Serbia** (23), **Moldova** (3) and **Ukraine** (11) also reported significantly more ASF cases in domestic pigs in June than in previous months.

On 18 July, Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1994 laying down specific control measures for African swine fever (ASF) and amending Annexes I and II to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 was published in the Official Journal L. Previously, there have been new outbreaks of African swine fever in wild porcine animals in **Poland**, as well as new outbreaks of African swine fever in kept porcine animals in **Lithuania, Latvia and Poland**.

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1994 is available at the following link:
http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/1994/oj

Import products of animal origin – amended model certificates

(28/04) Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2235 setting out the model animal health certificates and the model official certificates for the entry into the Union and the movement within the Union of consignments of certain categories of animals and goods (see EPG Newsletter No 1 of 7 January 2021) has been further amended. We would like to point this out for the sake of completeness. The corresponding Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1874 was published in the EU Official Journal L on 9 July 2024. The amendments concern the following articles of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2235:

Article 19: Model official certificate for the entry into the Union of gelatine intended for human consumption other than gelatine capsules not derived from ruminant bones

Article 24: Model official certificate for the entry into the Union of highly refined products intended for human consumption

Article 28: Model animal health/official certificate for the entry into the Union of non-shelf-stable composite products intended for human consumption and shelf-stable composite products intended for human consumption and containing any quantity of meat products except gelatine not derived from ruminant bones, collagen not derived from ruminant bones and highly refined products, and any quantity of colostrum-based products

Article 30: Model animal health certificate for the transit through the Union to a third country either by immediate transit or after storage in the Union of non-shelf-stable composite products intended for human consumption and shelf-stable composite products intended for human consumption and containing any quantity of meat products except gelatine, collagen and highly refined products, and any quantity of colostrum-based products

Article 31: Model health certificate in the case of ante-mortem inspection at the holding of provenance

Article 32: Model health certificate in the case of emergency slaughter outside the slaughterhouse

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1874 enters into force on 29 July and is available at the following link: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/1874/oj

EU monitoring the food chain with immediate effect

(28/05) The EU agri-food chain Observatory (AFCO) held its first meeting on 17 July. Its objective is to better understand the functioning of the supply chain and bring increased transparency on prices, structure of costs and distribution of margins and added value, while respecting confidentiality and competition rules. The launch of this Observatory was first announced in March 2024 as one of the measures to strengthen the position of farmers in the food supply chain and reinforce the trust between all actors

throughout the chain. Commissioner for agriculture, Janusz Wojciechowski, opened the Observatory's inaugural meeting. Exchanging information and taking stock of the situation in the food supply chain and, in the medium-term, developing methodologies to assess and monitor the structure of costs and the distribution of margins and added value along the chain are among the Observatory's main tasks. During this first meeting, an initial mapping of data available on prices, costs and added value is presented and members have a first exchange of views on the situation in the agri-food supply chain in the EU and in their country.

Members of the Observatory are representatives from the 27 EU countries' national authorities as well as from 48 stakeholder organisations operating within the agri-food supply chain. These range from farmers, input providers, food industry, traders, to transport, logistics, retail and consumers. The European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee have an observer status. The list of the AFCO members and observers is available in the Register of Commissions expert groups. The second plenary meeting will be held in Autumn of this year.

Further information on the EU agri-food chain Observatory can be found at the following link:

https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/news/eu-agri-food-chain-observatory-starts-working-restore-trust-and-improve-transparency-food-chain-2024-07-17_en

BfR Opinion - compliance with maximum PFAS levels in food of animal origin (Annex)

(28/06) Since January 2023, maximum levels have applied in selected food of animal origin in the EU : for perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA) and perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS) as well as for the sum of these four PFAS. Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, PFAS for short, are chemicals that are used in many industrial processes and are processed in numerous consumer products. They are difficult to break down and accumulate in the environment, for example in water and soil. As plants can absorb PFAS from the soil as they grow, livestock can accumulate these compounds through feeding, which then enter the human body when food of animal origin is consumed.

In a recently published opinion, the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has determined the maximum concentration of individual PFAS in complete feed for various livestock in order to comply with the maximum levels in food. PFAS levels in feed for cattle, sheep, fattening pigs and laying hens were modelled. According to the BfR's assessment, feed with a PFAS level below the calculated values does not lead to the maximum levels in food of animal origin being exceeded. Until the (intended) establishment of maximum levels in feed, the values can serve as consumer protection-based guidance values for various players in the environmental and agricultural sectors

We have attached the BfR statement "Feed is key to compliance with maximum PFAS levels in food of animal origin" to this circular.

Production of poultry meat is on a growth trajectory across the EU

(28/07) After the decline in poultry meat production in 2021 and 2022, the signs on the EU market are pointing to growth again. This is shown by the supply balance for 2023 published by the EU Commission in May with a forecast for 2024. In 2022, production declined, not least due to the sharp increase in production costs. Despite the ongoing threat of avian influenza, the EU Commission reported that gross domestic production of poultry meat in the EU is expected to have grown by 2.4% to 13.38 million tonnes last year. For 2024, the Commission expects an increase of 1.7% to 13.60 million tonnes. This would achieve a record result.

In recent years, the trend has been for less poultry meat to be exported but more to be imported. In 2023, duty-free deliveries from Ukraine were particularly noticeable. After the cap on duty-free import volumes, it remains to be seen how deliveries will develop in 2024. Overall, more goods were available for consumption in 2023, with the consumption of poultry meat increasing slightly more than production. This trend is likely to continue this year. Accordingly, the degree of self-sufficiency fell to 108% in 2023, compared to 114% in 2020. Thus, the EU remained a clear net exporter on the poultry market.

The consumption of meat as a whole has been declining in the EU for years. While in 2018 there was an average of 69.2 kg of meat per capita, the EU Commission expects a decline to 66.3 kg per capita in 2024. In particular, the consumption of pork declined. Poultry meat is the only type of meat for which the EU Commission still sees growth potential. From 2018 to 2024, poultry meat consumption increased by 1.5 kg from 23.1 kg to 24.6 kg per inhabitant. Accordingly, the share of poultry meat in total meat consumption grew and is expected to reach 37.1% in the current year.

Amending Lists of Establishments

(28/08) The European Commission has changed the lists of establishments approved for delivery to the EU for the game and poultry sector for the following third countries:

Meat from poultry and lagomorphs: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Switzerland, USA, United Kingdom

Meat products: Israel, Canada, Switzerland, Thailand, USA, United Kingdom (Northern Ireland), United Kingdom

Minced meat, meat preparations, MSM: Brazil, Iceland, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom

Meat from farmed game: Canada,

Wild game meat: United Kingdom

The current lists of establishments can be found on the website of the EU Commission under the following link:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/tracesnt/directory/listing/establishment/publication/index#!/search>

Annex:

- BfR – maximum PFAS levels in food of animal origin

Imprint

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