

Current situation on the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza

(03/01) In Lower Saxony, the Jade-Weser Veterinary Office in the district of Wittmund detected the avian influenza virus in a hobby poultry farm on 16 January 2025. Affected were 41 geese, ducks and chickens. The animals were killed. As this is a hobby poultry farm with fewer than 50 poultry, the special-purpose association has not set up an exclusion zone around the outbreak farm, meaning that no restrictive measures are planned.

On 21 January 2025, the EU Commission published Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/124 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 Germany (Baden-Württemberg and Lower Saxony), Italy (Veneto region), Hungary (Hajdú-Bihar county) and Poland (Łódź and Mazovia voivodeships). The annex to the decision contains the updated territorial scopes of the protection and surveillance zones as well as the provisional duration of the protection measures. Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/124 amends Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2447 accordingly. Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/124 is available under the following link:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32025D0124>

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

(03/02) 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) 2025/125 was published in the Official Journal L on 21 January 2025.

Canada has notified the Commission of two outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in poultry in the province of Ontario, which were confirmed by laboratory analysis (RT-PCR) on 27 December 2024 and 2 January 2025 respectively.

The United Kingdom has notified the Commission of two outbreaks of HPAI in poultry in the county of Norfolk, England, and in the council area of Angus, Scotland, confirmed by laboratory testing (RT-PCR) on 28 December 2024 and 10 January 2025, respectively.

The United States has notified the Commission of 24 outbreaks of HPAI in poultry in the states of Arkansas (1), California (6), Delaware (2), Indiana (1), Michigan (4), Mississippi (1), Missouri (1), Nebraska (1), North Carolina (1), Ohio (2), South Carolina (1), South Dakota (1), West Virginia (1) and Wisconsin (1) that occurred between 24 December 2024 and 7 January 2025. December 2024 and 7 January 2025 were confirmed by laboratory analysis (RT-PCR).

By the Implementing Regulation published on 21 January 2025, the European Commission suspended the entry into the Union of consignments of poultry, germinal products of poultry and fresh meat of poultry and wild feathered game from those areas in the United Kingdom and the United States.

In addition, Canada has provided the Commission with updated information on the disease situation with regard to HPAI in its territory, which gave rise 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.

Canada has submitted updated information on the disease situation in relation to two outbreaks of HPAI in the province of British Columbia confirmed by laboratory testing (RT-PCR) on 31 October 2024 and 21 November 2024 respectively.

The Commission has assessed the information submitted by Canada and considers that it has provided adequate guarantees that the animal health situation that led to the suspension of entry into the Union of consignments of certain products from the affected zones in accordance with Annexes V and XIV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/404 no longer poses a risk to public or animal health in the Union and that, consequently, entry into the Union of those consignments from the affected zones of Canada from which entry into the Union had been suspended should be authorised again.

Annexes V and XIV of 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) 2025/125 entered into force on 22 January 2025 and is available at the following link:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32025R0125>

Animal welfare initiative drivers for more animal welfare

(03/03) On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Animal Welfare Initiative (ITW), the food trade has underlined its commitment to the ITW. It is an impressive example of ‘what can be achieved when all players in the value chain pull together’, said the Chairman of the ITW shareholders' meeting, Edeka CEO Markus Mosa, at a celebratory event in Berlin on 20 January 2025. In the ITW, the food industry has found a means to fulfil its responsibility for animal welfare. ‘This anniversary is a milestone that we can all be proud of,’ said Mosa.

Federal Minister of Agriculture Özdemir described the ITW as a pioneer for transparency in the meat supply. The importance of transparency at the meat counter had already been recognised ten years ago. The ITW had thus drawn the right conclusions from the realisation that ‘consumers want to know how the animals whose meat they eat were kept.’ Özdemir welcomed the fact that the ITW had adopted the classification of the state husbandry labelling system into five husbandry systems: ‘Together, we are ensuring simple and clear labelling.’

Since its foundation, the ITW has set itself the goal of bringing animal welfare out of its niche and into the mainstream. Around 14,000 farms now belong to the organisation. According to ITW, it covers 90% of the poultry market and 60% of the pig market. It has thus established itself as one of the most important drivers for greater animal welfare in Germany.

Russia has significantly increased meat exports

(03/04) Russia exported significantly more meat and meat products in 2024. According to preliminary estimates by the Agroexport Centre of the Moscow Agriculture Department, a total of over 700,000 tonnes were exported, 27% more than in the previous year. Pork exports increased by around a third; the increase in poultry meat was 25%, while the figure for beef was 22%.

In terms of value, Russia's exports of meat and meat products increased by 24% last year to a record value of the equivalent of 1.64 billion euros. Almost half of this was accounted for by poultry meat, 37% by

pork and 14% by beef. Exports of poultry meat increased by 17% to €773 million compared to 2023. Pork exports reached a new high of EUR 589 million, exceeding the previous year's result by 42%. Exports of beef totalled around €222 million, 16% more than in 2023.

According to the Agroexport Centre, China has been the largest buyer of Russian meat since 2019. According to initial estimates, meat sales to the People's Republic increased by 14% to 541 million euros in 2024. It was followed by Saudi Arabia, which bought meat worth a total of EUR 222 million, an increase of 90% compared to 2023. In third place is Belarus, whose purchases totalled EUR 218 million in the first ten months of the year, an increase of 10%.

According to the Agroexport Centre, Russia has now achieved more than 100% self-sufficiency in meat and meat products. This not only guarantees food security on the domestic market, but also enables a further increase in exports. The Moscow market experts assume that Russian meat exports will exceed an annual value of 3.5 billion euros by 2030. That would be almost double the current level.

The head of the National Meat Association (NMA), Sergei Yushin, attributes the export success to government subsidies, in particular the partial reimbursement of logistics costs. The expansion of the product range, including live animals and breeding stock, has also had a positive effect. However, the growth in exports was also favoured by the favourable exchange rate for deliveries abroad and the fairly stable animal health situation in Russia, according to Yushin. The future growth of exports will largely depend on the development of domestic production and the extent of state support.

Current situation on African swine fever (Annex)

(03/05) According to the TierSeuchenInformationssystem ([TSIS](#)) of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) and the Friedrich Löffler Institute (FLI), the total number of confirmed cases of African swine fever (ASF) in Germany is currently 6,747 (as at 22 January 2025). There have been 136 confirmed cases in wild animals so far in 2025.

The current incidence of infection in Germany continues to be concentrated in the districts of Groß-Gerau, Bergstraße and Darmstadt-Dieburg in Hesse. In the meantime, there was another case in Rhineland-Palatinate on 8 January 2025 and the last report from Brandenburg was on 23 December 2024.

The current Radar Bulletin of the Friedrich Löffler Institute (see attached) analyses the current epidemiological situation in Hesse in more detail. The high number of infection reports is partly explained by the current intensive search for wild boar carcasses. It is also assumed that the Rhine plays a central role in the spread of the virus.

All current information on the course of the epidemic as well as infographics and a video on ASF are available from the BMEL at www.bmel.de/DE/themen/tiere/tiergesundheit/tierseuchen/asp.html and the FLI at <https://www.fli.de/de/aktuelles/tierseuchengeschehen/afrikanische-schweinepest/>.

Since the beginning of the year, ASF reports have increased again across Europe. The highest outbreak numbers to date have been reported by Poland (208), Germany (136), Bulgaria (99) and Hungary (85). The comparatively high number of reported cases in domestic pigs in Romania (14) is also worth mentioning.

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/164 laying down specific measures for the control of African swine fever (ASF) and amending Annex I to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 was published in Official Journal L on 24 January. Previously, there had been new outbreaks of African swine fever in feral pigs in Greece, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia and a new outbreak of African swine fever in kept pigs in Italy.

In addition, the disease situation in kept pigs and feral pigs has improved in certain areas of Italy, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia.

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/164 is available at the following link:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32025R0164>

Ukraine's EU accession - long transition period necessary

(03/06) The Chairman of the Ukrainian Agricultural Council (UAC), Andriy Dykun, wants to allay European farmers' fears of his country's EU membership. At the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) in Berlin, Dykun explained that Ukraine needs a long transition phase to prepare for possible accession. Joining the Community would be 'an ideological decision of Ukrainian society' and not an attempt to obtain support for Ukrainian farmers at the expense of the common EU budget, the association chairman made clear.

'Today, the agricultural sector and the processing industry account for 30% of our country's gross domestic product and 60% of foreign exchange earnings,' emphasised Dykun. Ukraine does not need subsidies from the EU because the domestic agricultural sector has always been a profitable business. Although there are large companies with more than 10,000 hectares of arable land, they only account for 20% of all agricultural producers. Rather, the agricultural sector is based on small and medium-sized enterprises. Changes to legislation in line with EU requirements would have a significant impact on their work.

The UAC chairman pointed out that Ukraine had lost many sales markets due to the Russian invasion. In future, farmers would have to compete with the Russians for these markets. At the same time, Ukraine continues to ensure food security in the world, especially in the Middle East and Africa. The availability of food for the populations of these countries is a prerequisite for preventing a new wave of migration to the EU.

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

(03/07) The most recent meeting of the Joint Management Committee for Animal Products took place on Thursday, 23 January 2024. The agenda included the market situation in the egg and poultry sector.

We have attached the EU Commission's latest presentation on the situation on the poultry market to this circular.

Annex:

- FLI – ASP Radar Bulletin, as of December 2024
- EU market situation poultry, January 2025

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, Internet: <http://www.epega.org>

The information letter is prepared with the utmost care, but we exclude liability. Reports are confidential and for personal use only.