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# GAIN Report

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## Romania

### Poultry and Products

## Lower poultry meat consumption due to Avian Influenza

### 2006

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**Report Highlights:**

As a result of the poultry meat consumption fall, U.S. poultry meat exports to Romania declined by 70% in December compared to September 2005. In Romania, avian influenza (AI) continued spreading towards west in Dolj County, close to the Bulgarian border, and south-east in Constanta and Tulcea counties. Currently there are 6 active AI outbreaks. All AI cases were detected in backyard poultry flocks, no poultry commercial operation being affected so far. Government spending on AI compensation for birds owners reached 1.4 million USD.

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
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Sofia [BU1]  
[RO]

As of February 17, out of a total 31 AI outbreaks detected in Romania since October 7, 2005, six outbreaks are still active.

### **Bird Flu continued spreading**

#### **--- Braila County**

On January 9, 2006, samples collected from households in two villages, Ciresu and Dudesti, tested AI positive. The two localities were put under quarantine and stamping-out policy was applied and premises were disinfected. Currently there are no active outbreaks in Braila county.

#### **--- Calarasi County**

Avian Flu continued spreading in the county and a second village was affected, Stefan-Voda. As the virus was detected in only one household, the partial stamping-out policy was applied on December 23, 2005. Currently there are no active AI outbreaks in Calarasi county.

#### **--- Ialomita County**

In addition to the existing 2 AI outbreaks in Ialomita county, on December 20, 2005 samples from two other locations tested positive for Avian flu virus, in Traian and Stelnica. On December 23, poultry from one backyard farm from Albesti village tested also H5 positive, bringing the total number of outbreaks in this county to 5. However, so far all AI outbreaks have been extinguished.

### **New outbreaks detected in February**

In February, Romania faced new outbreaks as part of the wild birds left northern countries due to the cold weather. They remained longer on the Romanian territory, benefiting from the relatively good weather and having plenty of food due to the low snow coverage.

#### **--- Dolj County**

On February 7, 2006, a new outbreak was detected in the southern-western part of Romania, in Dolj county. The village Cetate, located very close to the Bulgarian border (along the Danube river), was immediately placed under quarantine and about 21,000 birds were culled and incinerated. That was the first AI case detected in the western part of the country.

#### **--- Tulcea County**

In Tulcea county, in Salcioara village – Jurilovca locality, the AI virus was detected following the rapid tests on February 7, 2006. Jurilovca is located very close to Ceamurlia-de-Jos, where the first AI case was detected in October 2005. The stamping-out policy was applied. Few days later, new AI cases were detected in the village Sarina Suf.

#### **--- Constanta County**

On February 11, 2006, another county was affected by AI, Constanta. The AI virus was confirmed in the villages Topraisar and Ostrov and suspicious cases were detected in Vlahii village – Aliman locality. The quarantine measures were applied in all three spots and culling procedures are underway.

**Government spending on AI compensations**

The Romanian Government spent so far about 1.4 million USD for compensation granted to poultry owners in the affected villages. In total, about 170,000 birds have been culled.

**Poultry meat imports drastically shrunk**

In 2005, Romania imported 160,000 MT of poultry, of which 93,000 MT from the United States (58%). During the last trimester of 2005, the drop in poultry consumption due to the Avian Influenza presence in Romania, heavily affected poultry meat imports which decreased by 30%-35% each month since October (please see Figure 1).

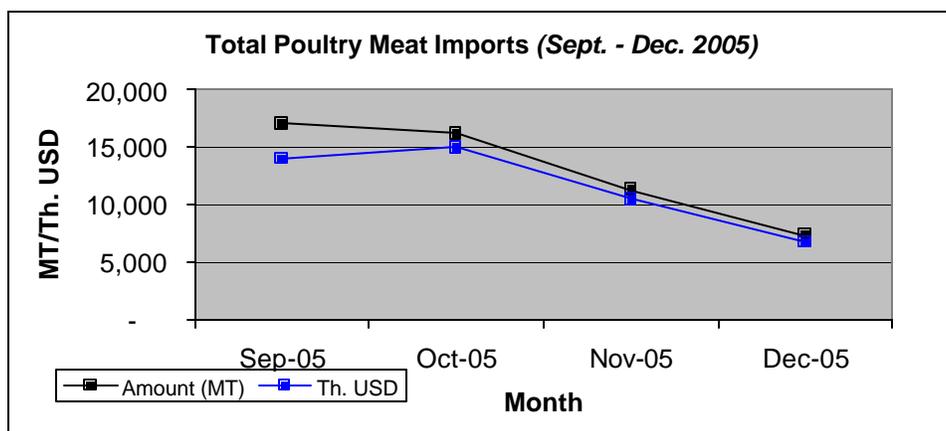


Figure 1

U.S. poultry meat exports to Romania followed the same declining trend. From an average amount of 8,000 MT/month in the first eight months of 2005, the U.S. poultry exports dropped in December to 3,500 MT/month (56% drop) (please see Figure 2).

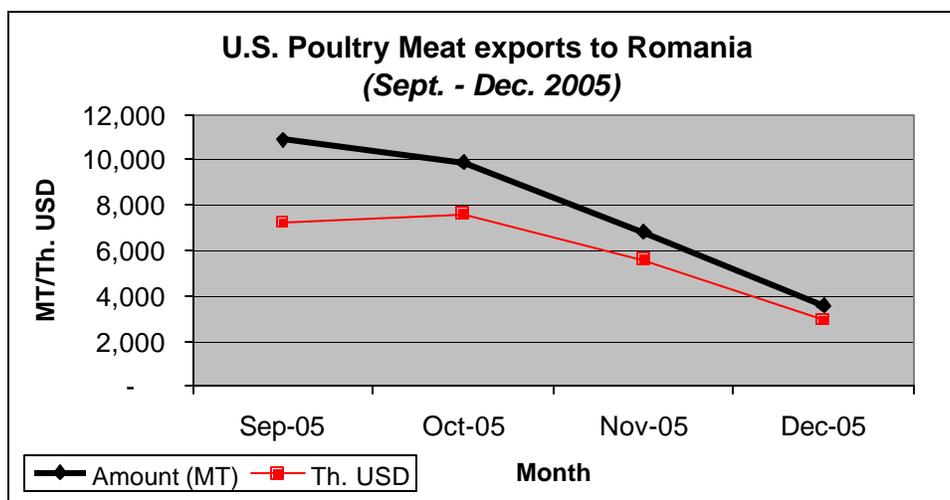


Figure 2

According to the Romanian Poultry Producers Association, the domestic poultry sector registered losses worth of 41 million USD during the last trimester of 2005, primarily due to sales price drop (41%), delays in populating farms (23%), storage costs (14%). Export restrictions, slaughter delays and slaughter disinfection generated losses of 1.5 million USD (22%). In January, total losses grew with 15.6 million USD.

European Union (EU) banned poultry meat imports from Romania as soon as the deadly AI strain H5N1 was confirmed. Recently EU accepted to regionalize Romania, so import restrictions are limited to counties affected by Avian Influenza or counties located in the south, east and north-east of Romania, with a high probability for AI infection. However, the major part of poultry establishments authorized for export to European Union are located in the area under restriction, so no significant recovery on poultry exports is expected in 2006.