



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

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United Kingdom

Poultry and Products

H5N1 confirmed again in wild birds in the UK

2008

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Report Highlights:

The UK Government has confirmed H5N1 Avian Influenza (AI) in three wild birds. Unlike in 2007 when H5N1 was found in commercial operations, this incident is not expected to have any significant impact on the UK poultry sector, be it through reduced domestic sales or the export trade, so long as it remains isolated. With the UK lying on key bird migratory routes, the UK has resigned itself to expect occasional cases of AI in the wild bird population. That said, and as is to be expected, the UK Government has acted quickly to ensure that there is no spread of the disease and to endeavor to identify the source.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Annual Report
London [UK1]
[UK]

On January 10, 2008 the UK Government's Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) confirmed H5N1 Avian Influenza in three dead wild mute swans in the county of Dorset, 150 miles south west of London. The birds were found and tested under the UK's routine surveillance program.

In its efforts to prevent any spread of the disease, a Wild Bird Control Area and Monitoring Area have been established around the premises. Within these areas bird keepers are required to house their birds or otherwise isolate them from contact with wild birds, bird movements are restricted, and bird gatherings are banned.

Defra has been quick to emphasize that no disease has been found in domestic birds. In addition, a program of surveillance is being carried out in the local wild bird population and a full epidemiological investigation is underway.

This is the second time highly pathogenic H5N1 Avian Influenza has been detected in a wild bird in the United Kingdom. The previous case was a swan found in Scotland in April 2006. Both are on key migratory routes. H5N1 cases in commercial poultry in the UK were also confirmed in Norfolk in November 2007 and in Suffolk in February 2007. The first recorded case of H5N1 in the UK was in a quarantine premises in Essex in October 2005.

The UK Government has reacted quickly to the confirmation of disease, principally to limit any possible spread. However, as the cases are in wild birds rather than commercial operations there will likely be very little impact on, or consequences for, the poultry export trade from UK. Consumer reaction is also expected to be minimal, if any, and it is not expected that the incident will affect the UK's intention to regain its OIE Avian Influenza 'officially free' status later this year.

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| UK7005 | H5N1 developments in the UK | 02/08/07 |
| UK7004 | H5N1 confirmed in UK turkey flock | 02/05/07 |
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| HU7002 | Hungary Announces Suspected Case of Avian Influenza in Commercial Poultry | 01/30/07 |
| UK6008 | UK – Avian Influenza Update | 03/07/06 |
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| UK5034 | Avian Influenza Update | 12/02/05 |
| UK5031 | Update on H5N1 in quarantine in the UK | 11/16/05 |
| UK5027 | H5N1 confirmed in a quarantined bird in the UK | 10/24/05 |