March 5, 2015

MARCH 2015 AVIAN INFLUENZA CONFIRMATION DISEASE ALERT

As a result of continued influenza surveillance in Minnesota, the following poultry flock has been confirmed of being infected with Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

MNAIU01-15 – breeder turkeys

a) 18 week breeder replacement hens with elevated mortality/clinical signs
b) Diagnostic samples collected February 27, 2015 (flock size – 22,000)
c) **Flock is located in Pope County, MAPP Code = 61BARS17B**
d) 1/1 pooled tracheal swab sample was PCR Matrix positive at the University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory with the sample subtyped **H5 POSITIVE**. Sample has been submitted to the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) and has been confirmed – **HPAI H5N2**.
e) As a result of these test results, the Minnesota H5/H7 LPAI Emergency Disease Management Committee has been notified, prepared with the Board to respond accordingly. These actions include increased surveillance, biosecurity and movement restrictions per the APHIS HPAI Response Plan.
f) **Background and Response:**
   • The 18 week turkey breeder replacement flock had slightly elevated mortality on Thursday February 26, 2015 in one barn of 15,000 birds, 2nd barn was unaffected. The following day (Friday), mortality escalated dramatically with several hundred birds found dead in the morning and mortality continued throughout the day and weekend. Samples were collected for avian influenza testing and delivered to the UM-VDL with confirmation at NVSL.
   • When the Board received confirmation from NVSL, they informed us that this strain is one of the Eurasian strains that have already been identified on the West Coast (Pacific Flyway). H5N1, H5N2 and H5N8 have been identified in the Pacific Flyway. I do not need to remind you that this is a huge event and that recognition of the serious nature of this event at all levels is crucial!
   • This is the first finding of HPAI (Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza) in the Mississippi flyway. It is the same strain of avian influenza that has been confirmed in backyard and wild birds in Washington, Oregon and Idaho as part of the ongoing incident in the Pacific flyway.
   • APHIS is partnering closely with the Minnesota Board of Animal Health on a joint incident response. State officials quarantined the affected premises (Index Premises and Epidemiologically-Linked Premises) and the remaining birds on the properties will be depopulated to prevent the spread of the disease. Birds from these flocks will not enter the food system.
   • The APHIS Stakeholder Announcement is included in this disease alert.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative formats of communication upon request by calling 651-296-2942. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711 or 1-800-627-3529. The Board of Animal Health is an equal opportunity employer and provider.
BIOSECURITY – now is the time for you and your employees to implement your critical level biosecurity programs. Some important biosecurity practices to consider as part of your programs are:

1. **Poultry should be kept away from areas in which they’d have access to or potentially share an environment with wild birds, especially waterfowl or shorebirds.** Ideally they should be housed indoors.

2. **Barn doors need to be closed at all times.**
   a. Consider delaying total cleans of finishing farms during our high risk time period (now-May 15 or ice out). This is to protect you from accidentally dragging something onto your farm/into your barns as well as avoiding damaging thawing driveways which can create watering holes for migrating birds.
   b. Equipment (tillers, mortality carts, etc.) need to be inside barns now and not moved outside until May 15 or until ice out. Avoid moving equipment between barns as tires can’t be cleaned well, especially when it’s muddy outside.

3. **Nothing can enter the barn unless it’s been properly cleaned and disinfected.** Equipment (spare parts, loading panels, etc.) need to be stored inside so that wild birds can’t get to it. Trucks (poul truck, shavings trucks, etc.) are not to driven into the barn.

4. **Use barn specific coveralls and boots.** These should be kept in the barn’s entryway and changed into prior to entering the flock. Coveralls and boots should be removed and left in the entry. Do not wear them outside.

5. **Eliminate standing water** to prevent wild waterfowl from gathering on the farm property.

6. **Address feed spills immediately** to avoid attracting wild birds.

7. **Eliminate unnecessary farm visits** from anyone not essential.

You will hear more on this disease event through the MTGA, CEAM, University of Minnesota, Board and at the Midwest Poultry Federation Convention later this month.....stay tuned.

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