With spring soon upon us in Minnesota, the threat of another HPAI introduction will also soon become a reality. One of the lessons learned in 2015 was the importance of identifying positive flocks early in course of the disease and quickly depopulating these flocks, thereby containing the virus. As seen in Indiana earlier this year, a rapid response is critical to preventing the spread of the HPAI virus. As a result of this lesson learned, the Minnesota Board of Animal Health has secured funds to increase HPAI surveillance in 2016 by covering HPAI laboratory testing costs at the University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. These surveillance efforts are above and beyond LPAI (Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza) or company directed/funded surveillance. However in order to use the Board of Animal Health funds this spring/summer there are some specific requirements:

- Minnesota poultry producers who are Authorized Poultry Testing Agents will be responsible for collecting and submitting samples directly to the University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in St. Paul (1333 Gortner Ave.). Producers who are Authorized Poultry Testing Agents in good standing should know how to collect and submit samples to the laboratory. Please contact the Minnesota Poultry Testing Laboratory (MPTL) if there are questions (320-231-5170).
- Tracheal/Oropharyngeal Swabs are the recommended sample type for HPAI surveillance and they can be pooled up to 11 swabs/tube. It is recommended that swabs be collected from fresh daily mortality by inoculating BHI (Brain Heart Infusion) Broth tubes. Supplies required for sample collection are available from the MPTL.
- The MPTL has created and will supply specific HPAI Submission Forms upon request for each commercial poultry premises in Minnesota. Each commercial poultry premises will have their own unique form with their unique National Premises Identification Number (National PIN). This identification system is crucial to track test results to flocks and premises. By using these forms as directed the producer/company will not receive a bill for testing, but the Submitter/Affiliated Company/Veterinarian will be able to see the test
results if it is checked on the submission form. Lucinda Dahlberg is the contact for and gatekeeper of these documents. You can contact Lucinda on her direct line (320-441-6505) or via e-mail at Lucinda.dahlberg@state.mn.us. See the attached example submission form.

• One aspect of this HPAI surveillance is to focus on pre- and post-movement of commercial and/or breeder poultry from premises to premises. Plan ahead and be aware of when test results will be available when using this testing for poultry movements. For additional direction/recommendations on specific sampling protocols/timelines contact your consulting veterinarian. And of course this testing can also be used to test flocks where there are any increases/abnormal mortality noted. When in doubt test!

These Board funds will be available until the end of the current fiscal year (June 30, 2016). There should be ample resources for this additional HPAI surveillance in Minnesota, so take advantage of this testing opportunity. If there are questions please contact me, Dr. Shauna Voss or the MPTL.

Dale

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