

MEDIA STATEMENT

For immediate release

11 July 2017

HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA OUTBREAK UPDATE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Following the confirmation of an outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza of the H5N8 type on two farms in Mpumalanga, the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries has confirmed isolation of the virus on two other farms. The farms involved are commercial layer chicken farms in Gauteng and Mpumalanga. Both farms have been quarantined and further control measures are being implemented to curb the spread of the disease. DAFF has also confirmed that the depopulation of the two sites affected in June has been completed.

This strain has been found not to be dangerous to humans and the birds affected are a very small percentage of the total South African chicken flock. At this stage there is still a limited impact on chicken and egg supply. The South African Poultry Association and the Poultry Disease Management Agency (PDMA) continue to support the efforts of South African Veterinary Service Authorities in implementing control measures for the disease.

The registration process in respect of sellers and traders of live chickens is progressing well and role players are encouraged to comply with this control measure. Farmers are encouraged to observe strict biosecurity principles during this time to prevent introduction of the disease onto their farms. Should farmers require assistance they should contact their veterinarian or a state veterinarian.

Members of the public are requested to report any sightings of higher than usual levels of chicken or wild bird mortalities to their local Department of Agriculture or alternatively to the PDMA.

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