

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY
USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT
POLICY

Voluntary Public

Date: 12/3/2014

GAIN Report Number: NL4043

Netherlands

Post: The Hague

Bird Flu Outbreak in the Netherlands

Report Categories:

Poultry and Products

Pest/Disease Occurrences

Approved By:

Mary Ellen Smith

Prepared By:

Bob Flach

Report Highlights:

Since the first incidence on November 15, the highly pathogenic bird flu virus of the type H5N8 have been found on five farms in the Netherlands. The Dutch Government imposed transport restrictions and made a fund available for the affected farms. The Dutch poultry sector estimates the loss in poultry meat exports at \$100-200 million.

Current status of the bird flu outbreak in the Netherlands

The highly pathogenic bird flu virus of the type H5N8 is easily transmissible between birds and lethal for chickens. The virus can be transmitted from birds to humans, but is generally causing only mild symptoms. As from now, the bird flu virus of the type H5N8 has been detected at five farms;

- On November 15, at one farm in Hekendorp with 150,000 chickens.
- On November 20, at one farm in Ter Aar with 43,000 chickens.
- On November 21, at two farms in Kamperveen, one with 10,000 chickens and one with ducks.
- On November 30, at one farm in Zoeterwoude with 28,000 chickens.

All animals on the farms have been culled following EU guidelines. The Dutch Government and poultry sector fear that the virus will spread to the region with the most poultry farms, just east of the center of the Netherlands. In Barneveld, located in the center of that region, 8,000 ducks have been culled on a farm as a precautionary measure on November 22. The bird flu virus has not been detected on that farm, but a truck visited a farm en route from the farm in Kamperveen.

To prevent a further spread of the virus, the Dutch Government is investigating the source of the outbreaks. A test on 1,500 wild birds did not detect the H5N8 virus. On December 1, however, the highly pathogenic virus was found in two samples of droppings of the widgeon (a wild duck species).

The virus is of the type H5, the N type is not known yet. Based on research of the Central Veterinarian Institute (CVI) and the Wageningen University and Research Centre (WUR), the virus was introduced separately, most likely from migrating birds, at the farms in Hekendorp, Ter Aar, and Kamperveen.

Government measures

The Dutch Government imposed the following measures:

- On November 16, a 72 hours standstill was imposed for the whole country. This measure prohibits the transport of birds, eggs and manure, and imposes farmers to keep their poultry indoors.
- On November 23, the standstill was replaced by a regionalization of the Netherlands into four regions, between which contact is limited. This measure will be imposed for 23 days (see the attached map).
- Because slaughter capacity in some regions is insufficient, transport corridors are imposed.
- Four 10-km zones are imposed around the farms on which H5N8 has been found; from the North to the South these zones are around Kamperveen, around Ter Aar, around Zoeterwoude and around Hekendorp. In these zones a standstill of birds, eggs and manure is imposed and the other present poultry farms are sampled and inspected on the presence of the bird flu virus.
- On December 4, the Dutch Government will lift most of restricted transport measures, except in region A, in which most cases are located, and in the 10-km zones. The obligation to keep commercial birds indoors will be kept in place for the whole country.

Government funding

The Dutch Government will make funds available for the culled farms and poultry breeding farms which experienced market loss due to the standstill. These payments, and all other related measures to prevent the spread of the virus, will be paid by the Dutch Animal Health Fund. This fund is financed by the sector itself, the Dutch Government and the European Union.

Market implications of the bird flu outbreak

The value added income of the Dutch poultry sector and egg sector is estimated at respectively \$1 billion and \$0.85 billion in 2014 (based on figures of the WUR). Dutch exports of poultry meat and eggs were respectively \$2.43 billion and \$0.84 billion, of which respectively \$0.34 billion and \$0.15 billion is exported to third countries (based on the Global Trade Atlas). Because the Dutch sector cannot fulfill the declarations on the health certificates, exports are restricted to most Member States and third countries. Only a few countries have officially banned Dutch poultry; Hong Kong (export of \$31 million in 2013), South Korea (exports absent), Ukraine (\$4 million) and South Africa (\$89 million). The Dutch poultry sector estimates the loss in export at \$100-200 million, only for the meat.