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GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Hong Kong

Post: Hong Kong

HKG on Full Alert for Human H7N9 Cases

Report Categories:

Agriculture in the News

Livestock and Products

Poultry and Products

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

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Report Highlights:

No abnormality has been reported in Hong Kong with respect to animal and human health despite the confirmation of three human cases of influenza A (H7N9) in mainland China.

General Information:

Hong Kong is on full alert upon confirmation of three human cases of influenza A (H7N9) in mainland China. The Center for Food Safety (CFS) pledged assurances that they are liaising closely with the mainland authorities over any abnormal situation concerning farms supplying chickens and pigs to Hong Kong. They emphasized that all supplies come from registered farms and are accompanied by valid health certificates. Furthermore, random tests for avian influenza are conducted for each consignment of live chicken imports to Hong Kong, while ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections are mandatory procedures for pigs in slaughterhouses. In view of the H7N9 cases in China, the CFS will deploy inspectors inspecting farms and meat processing facilities in China which are providing animal and meat supplies to Hong Kong to make sure that all required hygienic conditions are complied with.

The HKG received notification from the Chinese government on March 31 concerning three confirmed human cases of influenza A (H7N9). The two cases in Shanghai were two men aged 87 and 27, who passed away on March 4 and 10 respectively. Another case happened in the province of Anhui, the 35-year-old female patient is now in critical condition. All three patients were identified to have infected with H7N9. According to the notification, the 27-year-old man was a butcher while the 35-year-old woman had exposure history to poultry before the onset of symptoms. No epidemiological link between the three cases was identified.

The HKG is also stepping up surveillance of any human bird flu cases in Hong Kong. Influenza A (H7) is a statutorily notifiable infectious disease in Hong Kong. No abnormality has been reported so far.