Part 430 – Homeland Security and Crisis Responsibilities

Subpart I – Biosecurity Protocols for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Operation

403.90 Purpose

Provide instructions in response to the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) affecting the poultry industry per Title 130, General Manual (GM), Part 403, Subpart H, Biosecurity Preparedness and Response.

403.91 Background

A. HPAI could affect more flocks across the United States in 2022 than in the 2014-2015 outbreak when over 211 commercial flocks and 21 backyard flocks were infected and destroyed, amounting to approximately 50,400,000 birds in 21 states. In the spring of 2022, HPAI had already been confirmed in 127 commercial flocks and 69 backyard flocks in 27 states amounting to approximately 27,118,547 birds.

(1) HPAI spreads in various ways, including—
(i) Migratory birds
(ii) Local birds and rodents
(iii) Airborne dust up to a mile radius
(iv) People using poor biosecurity methods
(v) Farm to farm when vehicles and equipment are shared or not cleaned and disinfected appropriately

(2) Effective biosecurity activities must target all of the above methods of disease transport.

(3) Methods of disposal of infected flocks of birds must follow all local, State, and Federal laws. For most sites and flocks of all sizes, onsite disposal is more biosecure than taking carcasses offsite. Disposal methods may include—

(i) Composting within the affected poultry house
(ii) Composting outside
(iii) Burial
(iv) Landfill
(v) Rendering
(vi) Incineration

B. NRCS field offices may be asked to provide advice on soils recommendations for suitable burial sites for infected poultry flocks. Soils information can be received from the Web Soils Survey, and questions regarding appropriate soils for burial can be directed to the NRCS resource soil scientists or State soil scientists.

403.92 Procedure

A. When an HPAI outbreak occurs, state departments of agriculture and the USDA Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will enforce a system of restricted zones around affected farms limiting access to the infected farm and surrounding farms. Many people, including NRCS personnel, will be prevented from entering the restricted zone.

B. USDA's Defend the Flock Program is available to assist poultry farmers with free tools, resources, and checklists to help everyone who works with or handles poultry to follow proper biosecurity practices. This was developed by USDA specifically for farmers and others who handle poultry and can be circulated to farmers as needed. Encourage poultry farmers to practice all biosecurity practices that are being recommended by USDA and their industry.

(1) The USDA's APHIS provides guidance documents and initial response and policy recommendations to be followed if there is an HPAI outbreak in a flock.

(2) The National Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) Code 368, Emergency Animal Mortality Management, adopted by NRCS in September 2015, contains an emergency mortality response plan. Completing the information in that document should assist with the flock plan.

(3) CPS Code 368, Emergency Animal Mortality Management, may not apply to catastrophic mortality resulting from disease. In cases of disease-related catastrophic mortality, this standard is applicable only when the appropriate State or Federal authority (typically the State veterinarian or APHIS) approves the use of the methods in this CPS.

(4) Emergency mortality planning should include pre-incident—
(i) Planning for burial
(ii) Locating sources of carbonaceous material for composting
(iii) Locating landfills that accept diseased mortality

C. NRCS staff will implement the Biosecurity Protocols for Poultry Operations (see 310.4, Exhibit) when an outbreak of HPAI is suspected, and relay this information to partners to prevent or diminish the chance that agency personnel or vehicles will transmit this virus, or any other disease associated with the poultry industry.

403.93 Web Sites Related to Biosecurity

NRCS handbook

https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/viewerFS.aspx?hid=46798

A. USDA Biosecurity Resources, Tools, and Checklists

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program/dtf-resources/dtf-resources

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/downloads/animal_diseases/ai/HPAIchecklist.pdf

B. NRCS Emergency Animal Mortality Management Conservation Practice Standard

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/PA_NRCSConsumption/download?cid=nrcseprd340743&ext=pdf

C. NRCS Conservation Webinar by Science and Technology on Biosecurity, Emergency Mortality Conservation Practice and 2015 Avian Influenza Outbreak

http://www.conservationwebinars.net/webinars/emergency-animal-mortality-standard-and-hpai

D. NRCS Conservation Webinar on Biosecurity by West National Technology Support Center

https://conservationwebinars.net/webinars/biosecurity-basics-for-nrcs-farm-visits/?searchterm=biosecurity

E. APHIS Avian Influenza Guidance Documents

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/avian-influenza/ai-guidance-documents

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/emergency-management/hpai/fadprep-hpai

F. APHIS Standard Operating Procedures for all Cleaning and Disinfection

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/sop/sop_cd.pdf

G. Short APHIS PowerPoint on Cleaning and Disinfection

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/ed_materials/cd_rr_presentation.pptx

H. APHIS Carcass Management Dashboard

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/emergency-management/carcass-management

I. Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Center Video on Poultry Mortality Composting by Montana State University Extension

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fS07iNYq0jI

J. USDA APHIS Depopulation and Disposal of Birds in Your HPAI-Infected Flock

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/2016/hpai_depopulation_disposal.pdf

K. American Veterinary Medical Association Guidelines for Depopulation of Animals

https://www.avma.org/sites/default/files/resources/AVMA-Guidelines-for-the-Depopulation-of-Animals.pdf

L. Iowa State University's Center for Food Security and Public Health Biosecurity Resources

http://www.poultrybiosecurity.org/

403.94 Exhibit

Biosecurity Protocols for Poultry Operations