

## **APHIS Permits Entry of Hunted Wild Birds and Details Restrictions on Poultry Products from the Saskatchewan Province in Canada**

The Canadian Food Inspection Service Agency (CFIA) confirmed on September 27, 2007, that test results from samples collected at a commercial broiler breeder farm in the Saskatchewan Province in Canada were positive for a North American strain of an H7N3 highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) virus. The virus detected in Canada is not the HPAI H5N1 virus that has spread through birds in Asia, Europe and Africa. Current U.S.-Canada protocol, however, requires the implementation of certain restrictions in response to an HPAI detection in North America. Thus, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is taking swift action to prevent the spread of the virus and is placing restrictions on avian commodities entering the United States from Canada.

Because the most severe form of the avian influenza virus has not been found in North American wild birds and the transportation of hunter-harvest birds does not unduly increase the risk of introducing the virus into this country, APHIS will allow the entry of hunter-harvested birds and wild bird commodities from Canada, including the Saskatchewan Province, into the United States. As customary, hunters will need to show a permit to hunt in Canada in order to bring in their game. This decision is consistent with World Organization for Animal Health guidelines. APHIS, Wildlife Services, the Department of the Interior, state agencies and other partners continue to conduct extensive wild bird surveillance across the country.

### **Advice for Hunters**

While HPAI H5N1 has not been detected in wild birds in North America, common sense precautions are recommended to reduce the risk of contracting any wildlife disease.

- Do not handle or consume game animals that are obviously sick or found dead.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke while cleaning game.
- Wear rubber gloves when cleaning game.
- Wash hands with soap and water, or alcohol wipes, immediately after handling game.
- Wash tools and working surfaces with soap and water and then disinfect.
- Keep uncooked game in a separate container, away from cooked or ready-to-eat foods.
- Cook game meat thoroughly; poultry should reach an internal temperature of 165 °F to kill disease organisms and parasites.
- Uncooked poultry should be disposed of properly. Hunters are encouraged to report unexplained die-offs of birds or birds showing signs of being sick. Those observing such an event should call the local wildlife agency or 1-866-4-USDA-WS.

### **Commercial Products**

In accordance with an established protocol with Canada, APHIS' Veterinary Services (VS) program placed a temporary ban on the importation of poultry and commercial shipments of live birds, hatching eggs and unprocessed (not fully cooked) avian products from the province of Saskatchewan in Canada. The ban for the entire Province of Saskatchewan will remain until additional epidemiological information becomes available to reduce the area of restriction.

All commercial shipments of unprocessed (not fully cooked) avian products are prohibited from Canada unless accompanied by a CFIA certification that the product did not originate from the province of Saskatchewan or are accompanied by a VS import permit.

Fully-cooked avian products may enter in passenger baggage from Canada. Unprocessed (not fully-cooked) avian products from Canada will be not allowed in passenger baggage unless accompanied by a VS Import Permit or with proof that it did not originate from the province of Saskatchewan. Adequate proof of origin (APO) is documentary evidence of where an animal product comes from. Examples

include meat inspection certificates, certificates of origin, bills of lading, invoices, receipts, labels or documents on official letterhead prepared by the manufacturer, shipper or seller. CBP personnel can also determine an APO through interviewing the passenger.

Fully cooked poultry meat, fully cooked meat products, fully cooked eggs and commercially pasteurized egg products are not affected by this ban and will be allowed entry.

#### **Avian Pets**

Pet birds from Canada accompanied by documentation such as, but not limited to, a valid Canadian driver's license or passport showing proof of owner residence as being outside of the province of Saskatchewan will not be prohibited.

U.S.-origin pet birds and performing birds will be allowed to return from the province of Saskatchewan as long as bird owners have a VS import permit and the birds complete the required 30-day quarantine in one of the three USDA Quarantine Centers. The contact information for the USDA Quarantine Centers is as follows:

#### **New York, New York**

230-59 Rockaway Boulevard  
Suite 101  
Jamaica, N.Y. 11413  
Phone: (718) 553-1727  
Fax: (718) 553-7543

#### **Los Angeles, California**

Los Angeles International Airport  
11850 South La Cienega Boulevard  
Hawthorne, Calif. 90250  
Phone: (310) 725-1970  
Fax: (310) 725-9119

#### **Miami Animal Import Center**

USDA/APHIS/VS  
6300 NW 36th Street  
Miami, Fla. 33122  
Phone: (305) 526-2926  
Fax: (305) 526-2929

USDA will continue close coordination with Customs and Border Protection, the agency that enforces USDA requirements at the ports of entry to prevent prohibited products from entering the United States.

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