

Pertinent Information About Avian Influenza

- 1. Reasons for TAHC Involvement:** Classified as a reportable disease, due to the significant death loss infection can produce, as well as a disruptive effect on marketing.
- 2. Current Status:** Primarily a control program, responding to isolated occurrences of reported disease.
- 3. Causative Agent :** Virus, *Orthomyxoviridae* family, Type A Influenza virus. Numerous strains identified by hemagglutinin and neuraminidase surface antigens. H5N2 and H7N1 are the most commonly recognized.
- 4. Other names (synonyms):** Fowl plague, Bird flu, and A.I.
- 5. Other animals affected:** All avian species can be affected. Migratory waterfowl and other wild birds can serve as a reservoir.
- 6. Organs, tissues or systems affected:** Variable. Hemorrhages, swelling, fluid accumulation and necrosis in the respiratory, digestive and urogenital systems can be seen. Respiratory system most often affected.
- 7. How spread occurs**
 - Entry point:** Ingestion or inhalation of the virus by direct or indirect contact.
 - Exit point:** Virus can be excreted from the respiratory tract, conjunctiva and feces. Virtually anything(feathers, equipment, boots, clothing) contaminated with the virus can serve as a vector.
- 8. Symptoms:** Respiratory signs are usually predominant, but disease symptoms can range from inapparent, to a mild loss in production, to a severe, rapidly fatal generalized disease.
- 9. Incubation period:** Variable. Depends on the dose and virulence of the virus, route of exposure, environment and condition of the host.
Minimum: few hours **Maximum:** 14 to 21 days **Expected (Avg.):** ≤ week
- 10. How suspicious flocks are located (surveillance):** Active surveillance or diagnostic testing. Testing for sale and movement to other states.
- 11. How diagnosis confirmed:** Blood testing, virus isolation or PCR testing.
- 12. Case handling:** Poultry--strict quarantine of affected flocks and depopulation. Environmental cleaning and disinfection is required. Ratites--quarantine of affected flocks with follow-up test-and-removal, cleaning and disinfecting required.
- 13. Disposition of affected animals:** Commercial poultry--under some conditions may be moved under tight restrictions to slaughter. Ratites--quarantined until tested negative at least 60 days past clinical evidence of disease and removal of positive birds.
- 14. Restrictions on exposed animals:** Quarantine and testing required.

Avian Influenza, continued

15. Impact on other producers: Diagnosis can have a severe negative impact on the ability of producers to export interstate or overseas. Both poultry and poultry products may be affected.

16. Applicable regulations & information: General disease control and quarantine provisions apply. Chapters 51 and 57 TAHC Regulations; Vernon's Texas Codes Annotated Chapter 161 (statutes).

17. Unique problems: Due to the nature of the noncommercial industry in Texas, continued efforts need to be placed on owner education, standardization of identification, possible testing and record keeping requirements for movement and organized routine methods of disease surveillance and control. Fowl registration program implemented 2004. See brochure with this section.