

STATEMENT ON HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA H5N8

PAFF Committee of 5 December 2014

Given the current epidemiological situation with outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza of subtype H5N8 (HPAI H5N8) in three Member States and the detection of that virus in two of them in wild migratory birds during November, along with the potential ongoing risk of new outbreaks in poultry in the coming weeks, Member States have agreed at the meeting of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed on 5 December 2014 to:

- increase and keep a high level of awareness for the risk of virus introduction in the poultry sector (farmers, veterinarians, dealers, transporters, slaughter personal, poultry associations and other involved stakeholders);
- promote the application of biosecurity measures on-farm and along the whole poultry and egg production chain by working with the sector to enhance biosecurity through management decisions and, where feasible, encourage changes that limit the risk of infection or its spread;
- ensure the preparedness of the veterinary authorities including the update of contingency plans under the current situation;
- strengthen early collaboration between Member States, EU trading partners and provide for clear communication on measures that could affect other parties;
- ensure close co-operation with the whole poultry sector, with ornithologists and with veterinary epidemiologists in view of different possible outbreak scenarios;
- inform and invite the general public, bird watching organisations, hunters etc. to support the veterinary authorities by reporting abnormalities in wild bird populations in line with the published requirements of the Member States;
- incorporate the findings of the EFSA report and EURL surveillance report in considering whether (and if so how) to enhance surveillance of wild birds;
- support the review of measures on biosecurity and early detection systems (Decision 2005/734/EC) and on protection measures foreseen in case of highly pathogenic avian influenza of subtype H5N1 (HPAI H5N1) detection in wild birds (2006/563/EC) in order to assess if, and if yes, to which extent these might also be applied in the current situation with respect to HPAI H5N8.