

The SENASICA takes control of the mobilization of poultry products in Jalisco, Nuevo León, and Sonora

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) A(H5N1) currently affects birds in Asia, Europe, Africa, and America. The migration of ducks and geese from the United States and Canada has caused outbreaks in many locations in Mexico



The National Agro-Alimentary Health, Safety and Quality Service (SENASICA) has put the states of Sonora, Nuevo León, and Jalisco in quarantine, to lower the chances of the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) A(H5N1) virus from spreading, and protect the national poultry farming, which is strategic for the food security of the Mexican population.

The agency of the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development implemented quarantine measures in Jalisco after confirming the presence of the virus in an egg-laying farm in the municipality of San Miguel el Alto, with an approximate bird population of 360,000.

The vaccination of the birds will start soon, in accordance with the strategic plan designed by technicians of the SENASICA's General Directorate of Animal Health (DGSA), whose main priority is ensuring the supply of chicken and eggs for national consumers.

There are vaccines available to start the immunization of the birds, and there are talks with laboratories to implement a large-scale production that will make possible to fully cover the demand from the poultry sector.

It is worth mentioning that the DGSA, through the SENASICA's Mexico-United States Commission for Prevention of Foot-and-Mouth Disease and other Animal Exotic Diseases (CPA), has

confirmed the presence of highly pathogenic avian influenza A(H5N1) in nine other federated states: Aguascalientes, Baja California, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Estado de México, Jalisco, Nuevo León, Puebla, and Sonora.

For the moment, the A(H5N1) virus has been detected in five commercial farms in Sonora (3), Nuevo León (1), and Jalisco (1), and in three backyard operations in Chiapas, Chihuahua, and Estado de México, respectively, and it has infected 852,000 birds, which account for 0.040% of the national poultry stocks.

The SENASICA pointed out that the anti-epidemic measures mandated by the Animal Health National Emergency Device (Dinesa) have been implemented, and that the affected farms are under strict quarantine and undergoing the depopulation process under the official supervision of the Animal Health Emergency State Groups (GEESA).

Since the presence of the virus was confirmed in farms in Sonora, Nuevo León (and now Jalisco), the SENASICA implemented an internal quarantine, which consists in controlling the mobilization of poultry products, i.e., the producers must demonstrate that their farms are free of HPAI A(H5N1), through tests carried out in the official laboratories of the Secretariat of Agriculture, and private laboratories authorized by the Secretariat.

Authorized veterinarians-zootechnicians in charge (MVRAs) are responsible for reporting to the health authorities any suspected presence of the disease in poultry production units (PPUs), and request the implementation of a preventive quarantine, to which the owner of the animals must abide.

In quarantine, the Dinesa establishes preventive and restrictive measures that poultry producers and traders must follow to prevent the introduction and spread of the disease in a region from a reported outbreak location.

If the laboratory analysis turns out positive for avian influenza, then the CPA's personnel puts the PPU in definitive quarantine, and immediately starts the anti-epidemic measures in the farm.

Moreover, the official personnel delimit a focal area with a radius of three to five kilometers to carry out an epidemiological survey, and if necessary, a perifocal area can be extended to a radius of five to ten kilometers, centered on the affected PPU.

The quarantine can also delimit a buffer area around the properties close to the affected area, where the personnel can implement surveillance actions to increase the security, even if the presence of the virus has not been detected there.

The HPAI A(H5N1) is a disease present in four continents, that spreads through the migration of aquatic fowl (ducks and geese,

mainly) which do not suffer from excessive mortality due to the disease.

Due to the presence of this virus in Canada and the United States, where poultry farming has been seriously compromised, the SENASICA since 2014 started an active epidemiological surveillance program in many of the country's wetlands. The analysis of wild fowl makes possible the quick detection of the disease and timely actions to prevent greater harm to the poultry farming sector.

The SENASICA again exhorted producers to protect their poultry production units, and strictly comply with the measures established by the Dinesa, reinforce security measures, and timely report any suspicion of the disease through the communication channels established by the SENASICA: the AVISE app, the 800 751 2100 phone, and the state offices of the Secretariat of Agriculture, the SENASICA, and the CPA located across the country.

The supply of chicken meat and eggs is guaranteed, and this virus is not a risk for public health, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).