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 DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH & FOOD SAFETY

Directorate G – Veterinary and International Affairs
 Director

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HPAI - FAX – (17/06/2015)

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Number of pages: 2

Subject: **Highly pathogenic avian influenza in the United States of America
 Updated Epidemiologic Analysis of the HPAI outbreaks**

Message:

USDA/APHIS has published an ***“Epidemiologic and Other Analyses of HPAI-Affected Poultry Flocks”*** as of 15 June 2015, which is an update to the preliminary report that was provided to Member States in preparation of the meeting of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed. Please find here the respective link:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_dis_spec/poultry/downloads/Epidemiologic-Analysis-June-15-2015.pdf

After conducting investigations on over 80 commercial poultry farms, APHIS analysis indicates that there are likely several ways the virus could be transmitted, including lapses in biosecurity practices and environmental factors. APHIS cannot, however, associate HPAI transmission with one factor or group of factors in a statistically significant way at this time, and will continue to update this report regularly as more analyses are completed.

APHIS scientists believe that wild birds were responsible for introducing HPAI into commercial poultry. While wild birds are the original pathway for the virus’ introduction into the United States, it appears the virus was spreading in other ways as well, given the number and proximity of farms affected by HPAI. For instance, the report provides evidence that a certain cluster of farms was affected by identical viruses, pointing to possible transmission among those farms. In addition, genetic analyses of the HPAI viruses suggest that independent introductions as well as transmission between farms were occurring in several States concurrently. APHIS has also observed the following: sharing of equipment between an infected and non-infected farm; employees moving between infected and non-infected farms; lack of cleaning and disinfection of vehicles moving between farms; and reports of rodents or small wild birds inside the poultry houses. APHIS is compiling these practices and will present these findings in a subsequent update of this report.

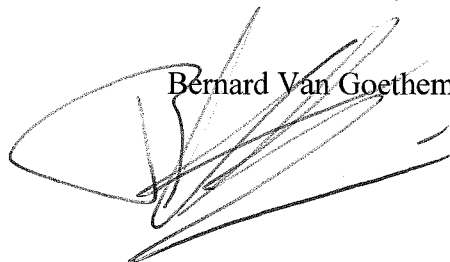
Based on an analysis by APHIS, environmental factors may also play a part in transmitting HPAI. APHIS found that air samples collected outside of infected poultry houses contain virus particles, indicating that the virus could be transmitted by air. APHIS is conducting additional analyses to better characterize environmental factors that may contribute to virus spread.

Let me recall that an update on HPAI outbreaks in the US, as well as findings in wild birds can be accessed via the following link to the APHIS website:

[http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/home!/ut/p/a1/04_Sj9CPykssy0xPLMnMz0vMAfGjzOK9_D2MDJ0MjDz9vT3NDDz9woIMnDxcDA2CjYEKIoEKDHAARwNC-sP1o8BKnN0dPUzMfYB6TCyMDDxdgPLmlr4GBp5mUAV4rCjIjTDIdFRUBADp5_IR/?1dmy&urile=wcm:path:/aphis_content_library/sa_our_focus/sa_animal_health/sa_animal_disease_information/savian_health/ct_avian_influenza_disease](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/home!/ut/p/a1/04_Sj9CPykssy0xPLMnMz0vMAfGjzOK9_D2MDJ0MjDz9vT3NDDz9woIMnDxcDA2CjYEKIoEKDHAARwNC-sP1o8BKnN0dPUzMfYB6TCyMDDxdgPLmlr4GBp5mUAV4rCjIjTDIdFRUBADp5_IR/?1dmy&urile=wcm:path:/aphis_content_library/sa_our_focus/sa_animal_health/sa_animal_disease_information/saavian_health/ct_avian_influenza_disease)

Yours faithfully,

Bernard Van Goethem



C.c: M. Valletta, J. Gurstis (Cabinet Commissioner Andriukaitis), E. Brivio (DG COMM), L. Miko, B. Gautrais, S. Plecita Ridzikova, R. Domenech Amado, L. Terzi, A. Rys, M. Scannell, C. Bertrand, J.-F. Ryan (DG SANTE), I. Brown (EURL, Weybridge), DG Agri, DG Trade, DG Near, OIE, FAO, EFSA, ECDC, Council Secretariat, Del Turkey, Del Russia, Del Switzerland, USA Mission to the EU, Del USA.