



Bird Flu News 13 – 20 December 2006

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SKorea culls 365,000 poultry after 3rd bird flu case in less than a month

December 13, 2006



SEOUL, South Korea: South Korea completed the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of poultry Wednesday after the country's third reported case of bird flu in a month, an official said.

About 365,000 quails and chickens have been destroyed in Gimje, about 262 kilometers (160 miles) south of Seoul, since Tuesday, a local government official said, asking not to be named citing protocol.

The government confirmed an outbreak of bird flu at a quail farm in the city on Monday.

That brought the total number of poultry culled in the three bird flu cases since last month to more than 1.13 million. More than 770,000 chickens were destroyed as a result of the first two outbreaks.

The virus that caused the latest outbreak was the H5 strain, and most likely H5N1, although this was not immediately confirmed, the Agriculture Ministry said.

The site of the third outbreak is about 18 kilometers (11 miles) south of the first outbreak site.

In the last known outbreak of bird flu in South Korea, in 2003, about 5.3 million birds were culled.

Infections among people have been traced to contact with infected birds, but experts fear the virus could mutate into a form that could create a pandemic among humans.

- Source: [The Associated Press](#)

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Flu shot doesn't need perfect virus match - study

13 Dec 2006

BOSTON, Dec 13 (Reuters) - The annual influenza vaccine can protect against illness even if it isn't perfectly attuned to the flu strain going around, researchers said in a finding that may have implications for protecting people against bird flu.

Flu viruses mutate over time, a process called "drift." So viruses that sweep across the country may not always be those selected each February as the basis for the annual vaccine.

The study, to be published in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine, found that the flu vaccine works even when drift has occurred.

Suzanne Ohmit of the University of Michigan School of Public Health and her colleagues found that in the fall of 2004, Sanofi-Pasteur's <SASY.PA> FluZone vaccine was 77 percent effective and MedImmune Inc.'s <MEDI.O> Flumist worked in 57 percent of the cases even though the flu strain making the rounds that year was not selected for the vaccine.

"We were surprised to learn that it worked as well as it did in a year when we might have thought it would have been less effective," said Arnold Monto of the University of Michigan School of Public Health, another member of the team. "It is ideal to have a vaccine match what is circulating. But even when it doesn't match exactly, you can get protection."

Monto told Reuters that the finding carries lessons for treating the predicted bird flu pandemic. Researchers are working on a vaccine, but there is no guarantee that the virus will match the strain that causes an outbreak.

Instead of stockpiling the vaccine, it might be wise to start inoculating people now, he said.

Source: Reuters

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New Zealand unanimously passes bird flu bill

Wednesday, December 13, 2006

New Zealand's Parliament today passed the Epidemic Preparedness bill by a unanimous vote. The bill gives the Government sweeping powers to suspend almost all laws to control a bird flu outbreak, however the conditions for triggering the bill have been tightened.

The bill will ensure that, should there be a human outbreak of avian influenza, or of a similar disease capable of becoming an epidemic, the Government has powers available to it to ensure a proper response.

The bill provides for the Summoning Parliament or recalling the House during an epidemic, delaying a sitting of the House or summoning Parliament, ban public gatherings, requisition buildings, vehicles and medicines and allowing police to detain people for medical tests.

The bill also allows the quarantine of people suspected of having bird flu or other pandemic diseases.

The complete bill can be found here >>> [Bill in PDF format](#) <<<

- Source: <http://www.avianinfluenza.org/>

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INDONESIA: Students spreading bird flu message

Exaggerated media reports scare people from eating eggs and chicken, say organizers

Wednesday, December 13, 2006

Tangerang --- The Indonesian Youth Forum on Tuesday visited a traditional market in Cipuka, Tangerang, as part of a nationwide campaign to raise awareness about bird flu.

The group, sponsored by the Agriculture Ministry, hit the road on Dec. 1, encouraging people in Bandung, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Medan, Bandar Lampung and Denpasar to stop worrying and eat chicken.

The World Health Organization says chicken and other poultry are safe to eat if cooked well.

Cooking poultry throughout, so that no meat remains raw or red, kills the virus.



"We want to meet consumers, chicken traders, chicken enthusiasts and slaughterhouse managers to share tips and information so they can protect themselves against bird flu," forum founder Elmir Amien told The Jakarta Post at Cikupa market.

Elmir is also the chairman of the Indonesian Farmers Council.

"Since the country's first case of bird flu was reported in 2003, the disease has only killed 53 of the 76 people infected, but the poultry industry has incurred huge financial losses because exaggerated media reports have made people too scared to eat eggs and chicken," he said.

Since 2003, avian influenza has killed more than 150 people around the globe. Indonesia has confirmed 74 cases of infection and 57 deaths.

"Bird flu is not as dangerous as TB or even crossing the road," Elmir said.

He said the rate of animal-protein consumption in the country had decreased to four kilograms per capita per year, as a result of many months of intense media coverage of avian influenza.

Elmir compared this with Malaysia's animal-protein consumption of 40 kilogram per capita per year.

"Therefore, we must continue to educate the people so they aren't so paranoid about eating chicken and eggs," he said.

Dozens of students from Bogor Institute of Agriculture, the University of Indonesia, Jakarta University, Trisakti University, Jayabaya University and Pramadina University participated in the campaign Wednesday.

Other than talking with traders and shoppers, the students cleaned and disinfected all chicken coops in the market and put up posters reading, "the eggs and poultry sold here are free from avian influenza".

Didi Aswadi, the head of the Tangerang regency health agency, which facilitated the activity, said the agency had similar targets to the central government's in combating bird flu.



"We just want to make a contribution to accelerate the government's bird flu prevention and control efforts. This campaign is one of nine steps prepared by the government to reach its target," he told the Post.

He said there was no need for people to be afraid of eating poultry products.

"From now on, let's eat chicken and eggs because they are high in nutrients, which will help our children grow up healthy and smart."

- Source: [The Jakarta Post](#)

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Untrue Bird Flu Rumors Hurt US Poultry, Says Expert

Friday, December 15, 2006

GEORGIA - Poultry and poultry products are getting some bad press and are the subject of untrue rumors linked to Asian Bird Flu, says the University of Georgia's Jim Crawford.

As a University of Georgia Cooperative Extension agent, I want to assure you that eating eggs and other poultry products is safe in spite of the rumors you may have heard. As a matter of fact, the Georgia Poultry Federation wants you to know the truth about avian influenza.

The type of avian influenza occurring in Asia is called H5N1 HPAI highly pathogenic avian influenza. We have never had this strain in the United States and do not have it now.

The disease is currently causing a major outbreak in multiple Asian countries. It is extremely deadly to poultry, has spread to wild birds in those areas, has caused more than 100 infections in humans and has resulted in some human deaths.

Actually, the transmission of Asian bird flu from birds to humans is extremely rare. Furthermore, the truth is that almost all infected people have had close, direct contact with live poultry infected with Asian bird flu.

Most of the poultry in Asian countries is produced in small backyard or village flocks. This puts people there in frequent contact with these birds and their feces and other secretions.

The sheer number of backyard flocks and infected wild birds makes the task of controlling this disease very difficult. The problem in Asia also presents a real challenge because the virus is present in such a large geographical region. These underdeveloped areas are not able to make a large-scale eradication effort.

You can take comfort knowing that considerable effort has been made to prevent the introduction of Asian bird flu into U.S. poultry. Officials here have also prepared a response should the virus enter the U.S.

Unlike Asian poultry, U.S. poultry production units require very little handling of poultry. And the U.S. doesn't import any chicken, turkey or other poultry products from Asia. The fresh poultry you see in grocery

A Great Place stores is produced in the U.S., except for a very small amount produced in Canada.

- Source: [ThePoultrySite News Desk](#)

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18 - DENR holds media orientation on Bird Flu

Monday, December 18 2006



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has given the local media an orientation on bird flu at the Seafood House Conference Room in this city.

The Philippines, according to the DENR, is still Bird Flu Free and the office is asking for the support of the media to help disseminate information on bird flu to the public.

Among the topics discussed during the meeting were Philippine biodiversity--its conservation and management, the Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act, status of identified wet lands

in Region 9, tri focal agencies program on bird flu, the pattern of spread to humans, the pattern of spread to migratory birds and domestic fowls.

Present during the accession were the representatives of the Department of Agriculture, Department of Health and the DENR.

Regional Technical Director Edward Bisquera said that the DA, DOH and DENR must prepare for whatever might happen in case the bird flu enters the country.

During the forum, everything about the killer bird flu was explained to the members of the media.

The DENR is constantly checking migratory birds and the wet lands since bird migration season has begun. (PNA)

-- This email has been scanned by the Balita server.

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Suspected Bird Flu in France; 4,000 chickens in die-off

Mon Dec 18, 2006

Very breaking from the BBC... so far just a scrolling headline with "More Soon." Please add updates as you find them; I'll do the same. French sources would be great from you Francophones out there.

French authorities say they cannot rule out bird flu after 4,000 chickens died on a French farm on Saturday.

Officials have carried out tests on the dead birds found in Sarrey in the northeast Haute -Marne region, but the results are not expected until Tuesday.

The farmer says his flock of 7,000 chickens appeared healthy on Saturday morning, but by evening 4,000 had died.

France is the biggest poultry producer in Western Europe, breeding some 900m chickens, ducks and geese every year.



"In the absence of another explanation, we cannot rule out the theory of avian flu," an official of the French Veterinary Services Directorate told France-Info radio. "We are obliged to speak of suspicion," he said.

Source: BBC Breaking by Mogolori

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2 Geese Die of Bird Flu

Tuesday, December 19, 2006



ST. PETERSBURG (SPT) — Two geese at St. Petersburg's zoo died of bird flu on Dec. 8, Fontanka.ru reported Monday.

The zoo was closed down on Monday. The zoo's management said the closure was for routine maintenance in the run up for the New Year, it was reported.

"There's nothing extraordinary in what happened. One goose died of old age and an abscess, the other, which was younger, had a tumor.

"We have animals die every month," Fontanka.ru reported Irina Skiba, the zoo's director, as saying.

However, the news service reported that the cause of both deaths was bird flu and that this had been confirmed in Moscow.

"There is almost no chance that this is dangerous to people," an unidentified source told

- Source: Fontanka.ru.

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Russian zoo closes after two geese found dead

19 Dec 2006

ST PETERSBURG, Russia, Dec 19 (Reuters) - One of Russia's main zoos has closed down after the deaths of two geese sparked a bird flu scare, but the top sanitary official said on Tuesday that tests had not confirmed the outbreak of the disease.

"Samples taken from the dead geese did not test positive for bird flu," chief sanitary expert and head of Russia's consumer rights watchdog Gennady Onishchenko told Interfax news agency.

Zoo staff had also been given health clearance after examination, he added.

The zoo in St Petersburg, one of Russia's oldest, officially refused to explain its unscheduled closure on Monday night, but health officials linked it to the discovery of the two dead birds.

The zoo has about 800 birds in all. A notice at the zoo said it would remain closed until the end of the year.

"They did not die from bird flu," a local expert on bird flu, who had knowledge of tests carried out on the dead geese, told Reuters earlier.

"The birds had been vaccinated against bird flu."



Bird flu remains essentially an animal disease but it has infected more than 250 people worldwide since late 2003, killing more than 150, according to the World Health Organisation.

Experts fear the virus could mutate into a form that is easily transmissible between humans and spark an influenza pandemic, killing millions of people.

Source: Reuters

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Vietnam finds first bird flu outbreaks since August

20 Dec 2006



HANOI, Dec 20 (Reuters) - Vietnam has detected the lethal H5N1 bird flu virus in chickens and ducklings in two Mekong Delta provinces, the country's first infections since August, the Agriculture Ministry said in a report.

The H5N1 virus was found in more than 6,000 dead chickens and ducklings hatched more than a month ago but which had not been vaccinated against bird flu, the ministry's Animal Health Department said in the report seen on Wednesday.

Vietnam has been free of human bird flu cases since late 2005. In August, it found the H5N1 virus on a small duck farm in the southern province of Ben Tre in the Mekong Delta.

An H5 subtype avian flu virus resurfaced in Vietnam earlier this year, mainly in ducks and wild storks. Bird flu first arrived in the Mekong delta in late 2003 and has since killed 93 people in the country.

Health officials said earlier this month that a small density of the H5N1 virus existed in some birds despite a comprehensive poultry vaccination campaign which had helped Vietnam avoid infections of the virus now endemic in parts of Asia.

The Animal Health Department said all the poultry found dead were hatched illegally in the provinces of Ca Mau and Bac Lieu and tests had confirmed the presence of the H5N1 virus.

"The risk of bird flu widely spreading in the Mekong Delta is extremely high because farmers have thrown dead poultry into water channels for a long time," it said.

Temperatures were falling in the southern region incorporating the Mekong delta, which would also help the spread of a virus that thrives best in cooler temperatures.

Source: Reuters

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