

## Bird Flu News 24-26 Feb 2006

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### Portuguese urged to keep alert for possible bird flu

2006-02-25 10:37:29

LISBON, Feb. 24 (Xinhuanet) -- The Portuguese government on Friday asked the public to remain alert against any possible bird flu outbreak in the country in coming months.

Portugal is on the Spring migration routes of birds which can carry the deadly virus, Health Minister Antonio Correia de Campos said.

The Health Ministry will work with the Education Ministry to teach children about bird flu, he said.

School students have been warned not to touch dead birds, and advised to wash their hands immediately if they do so inadvertently.

Portugal's National Veterinary Research Laboratory said it had examined 1,121 birds found dead in the country and none had been found infected with bird flu.

Several European countries have registered cases of bird deaths from the H5N1 virus which can spread to people.

Across the world since 2003, the World Health Organization has detected 170 cases of human bird flu, which have killed 92 people, mostly in Asia. Vietnam, with 42 deaths, has been the hardest hit country by the virus.

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### Ministers order 3.5m doses of bird flu vaccine

Saturday February 25, 2006

James Meikle

Britain has ordered 3.5m doses of a vaccine against the H5N1 avian bird flu virus in the hope that immunising key workers will help protect them if a mutated pandemic strain arrives in this country. There is no evidence of how well the vaccine might work, and Conservative spokesman Andrew Lansley accused the health department of being "woefully complacent" about the dangers posed by avian flu.

There were fears yesterday that it had appeared for the first time in a poultry flock within the EU, and thousands of birds have died at a turkey farm in eastern France.

*The Guardian*

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## Bird flu found in French turkey farm

25/02/2006 - 01:36:52

The French government confirmed today that the H5N1 bird flu virus struck a turkey farm, in the European Union's first outbreak of the lethal strain in commercial poultry.



The confirmation came from the farming ministry, based on lab tests.

The turkey farm, in south-east France's Ain region, has been sealed off and the surviving birds slaughtered.

The spread of bird flu to commercial stocks in France, which has been working for months to prevent and prepare for an outbreak, served as a sobering sign for other developed countries that consider themselves well protected against the virus.

In an indication of the global impact of the French case, Japan had already temporarily suspended imports of French poultry yesterday, including the delicacy foie gras, meat and other internal organs, according to the Japanese Embassy in Paris.

In 2005, Japan imported 1,510 metric tons of duck and other poultry meat and 377 metric tons of internal organs, including foie gras, from France.

France has some 200,000 farms that raise 900m birds each year.

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## France Confirms Deadly Strain of Bird Flu on Farm (Update3)

2006-02-25 11:33 (New York)

*By Helene Fouquet and Simone Meier*

Feb. 25 (Bloomberg) -- France found deadly bird flu in domesticated turkeys, the first time the virus has been detected in farm animals in the European Union.

The H5N1 strain of the virus was found in a farm with 11,000 turkeys near the Swiss border, the Agriculture Ministry said today on its Web site. The farm is located a few kilometers from the site where two wild ducks were found dead earlier this week.

The spread of the virus in birds creates opportunity for human infection as people come into contact with poultry during slaughtering, plucking feathers, butchering or cooking preparation. At least 92 of the 170 people known to have been infected with the H5N1 virus since late 2003 have died, according to the World Health Organization.

"Across Europe, we will be coordinating our response efficiently with both the public health in mind but also by taking into account the interest of the farm sector," EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson told reporters at the opening day of the annual Agriculture Fair in Paris.

All of the farm's turkeys which hadn't already died from the illness were slaughtered and destroyed on Feb. 23. It's unclear how the virus entered the farm, where all of the fowl

were kept indoors with no contact to wild birds. Authorities are currently trying to find out how the turkeys caught the illness.

*Editor: Taylor*

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## Poland tightens measures against bird flu along German border

*2006-02-26 13:05:31*

WARSAW, Feb. 25 (Xinhuanet) -- Poland decided on Saturday to tighten control in areas bordering Germany to prevent the entry of bird flu which has killed two birds in a German city close to Poland.

A dead wild duck and a dead swan were tested positive for the most severe H5N1 strain of bird flu virus on the edge of Schwedt, a German city northeast of Berlin and near the border with Poland on Saturday, arousing high alert in Poland.

In the neighboring Polish state of Woj. Zachodniopomorske, the local emergency reaction department held an urgent meeting on Saturday night to discuss the situation.

After the meeting, the department announced a series of precautionary measures against the disease, including the launch of a blanket sanitization operation and close monitoring in several border regions.

Poland is also going to collaborate with Germany to jointly fight the pandemic, the department said.

According to the Polish Pulawy National Veterinary Research Institute, the fact that the bird flu virus has not been discovered in Poland does not mean that there are no birds infected with the disease in the country.

Since its first appearance in the European Union countries on Feb. 11, 2006, the deadly H5N1 strain of the bird flu virus has hit eight countries in the integrated zone, which include Italy, France, Germany, Greece, Austria, Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary.

*www.chinaview.cn*

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## Large poultry farms responsible for Bird Flu: farmers

*New Delhi, Feb. 26 (PTI)*

Expressing concern over the incidence of bird flu in Maharashtra and Gujarat, leading farmers' organisations blamed mismanagement and intensive farming by large poultry farms for the outbreak.

Alleging that lack of hygiene control in large poultry farms was the reason for the flu outbreak, Bharat Krishak Samaj and All India Kisan Sabha said now small farmers were running the risk of losing their backyard poultry to the disease.

Supporting the culling operation undertaken in the poultry farms, the farmer's body said bird flu in the large poultry business firm is not controlled in time, may spread to nearby villages affecting farmers rearing poultry.

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## France Fights Panic From Bird Flu Outbreak

*PARIS Feb 26, 2006 (AP)*

*By ELAINE GANLEY*

French President Jacques Chirac urged consumers not to panic Saturday, hours after the government announced the European Union's first outbreak of deadly bird flu in commercial poultry.

Chirac said chickens and eggs remained safe to eat as he munched a piece of the famously succulent chicken from the Ain region, where the lethal virus was confirmed in turkeys.

Panic among consumers is "totally unjustified," Chirac said during a visit to open the annual Paris Agriculture Fair. "The virus in question ... is automatically destroyed by cooking. So there is absolutely no danger."

Yet fear already was setting in, raising worries for a multibillion-dollar industry that makes France the premier poultry producer among the EU's 25 nations.

Japan's decision Friday to suspend imports of French poultry and poultry products, including foie gras, signaled the potential impact even before the confirmation that the deadly H5N1 virus had decimated a farm of more than 11,000 turkeys at Versailles in southeastern France.

Hong Kong also has temporarily suspended imports of French poultry, Brenda Chan, a spokeswoman of Hong Kong's Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, said Sunday.

In France itself, there has been a drop of up to 30 percent in poultry purchases in recent weeks. Chirac noted the "economic and social consequences" of panic and said the French must not fall into such a trap.

The lethal strain has spread from Asia to at least 10 European countries and Africa, and scientists fear it could mutate into a form that is easily transmitted between humans, sparking a pandemic. The disease has killed at least 92 people, mostly in Southeast Asia, according to the World Health Organization.

China on Sunday warned the public of a possible "massive" bird flu, and said two more people had contracted H5N1. The official Xinhua News Agency also quoted Agriculture Minister Du Qinglin as saying there was another new bird flu outbreak in eastern China.

Indonesia recorded its 20th human death from bird flu Saturday and India said two poultry farms in western Gujarat state had been contaminated by the virus in that nation's second known outbreak.  
*ABC News*



Veterinarian Philippe Giraud carries an autopsy on a swan, searching on the bird the flu virus, at a laboratory in Arras, northern France Friday Feb. 24, 2006. The bird was found dead earlier in the day in local park. ( AP Photo/Michel Spingler)

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## China Faces Threat of `Massive' Bird Flu Outbreak, Xinhua Says

2006-02-26 01:32 (New York)

By Rob Delaney

Feb. 26 (Bloomberg) -- China faces the threat of a "massive" outbreak of bird flu because of a recent increase in cases among migratory birds, state news agency Xinhua reported, citing Agriculture Minister Du Qinglin.

``The possibility of a massive avian influenza outbreak can't be ruled out," Xinhua cited Du as saying yesterday in a report to lawmakers in Beijing. The minister added that the country's ability to control outbreaks is ``gradually" improving, the report said.

Differences between China's bird flu situation last year and in 2004 include more outbreaks in 2005 among migratory birds, as opposed to farm-raised fowl, and some human outbreaks in areas where cases weren't detected among poultry, Xinhua said.

China has reported 12 human cases of bird flu, eight of which have been fatal.  
(*Xinhua*, 2-26)

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