Directorate general for food (DGAL)

French HPAI situation

Updated 26th November 2021

**Context**

The 2020-2021 European epizootic of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) hit Europe hard and despite the mitigation from mid-2021, the epizootic had resurged since August, with nearly 400 domestic outbreaks and more than 500 cases in the avifauna. It is in this fragile context that France on September 2nd 2021 recovered its free status from HPAI, in accordance with Chapter 10.4 of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code.

Since September 2, sporadic backyard cases have been detected in France in the departments of “Ardennes”(08) and “Aisne” (02). They have been notified to the OIE under the category "other than poultry". These backyards belonged to individuals without any commercial activity related to the poultry sector. All birds have been culled and sanitary measures put in place. In addition, since the end of September 2021 and in connection with this circulation of the virus, 5 cases in wildlife have been detected in ponds and lakes in the departments of “Meuse”, “Moselle” and “Meurthe-et-Moselle”.

On November 26th 2021, an outbreak has just been detected in the “Nord” (59) department, which again marks the loss of status for France.

**Health situation**

An isolated outbreak of HPAI was detected in a laying hen breeding on November 26th 2021 in the town of Warhem in the “Nord” department (59), leading to the loss of France's free status. Since the stage of suspicion and even before its confirmation, health management measures have been triggered with the establishment of regulated zoning (3 and 10km) around the breeding, strengthening of biosecurity measures, inventory of livestock and prohibition of poultry movements in the restricted area. An epidemiological investigation is being consolidated.

**Way forward for export and HPAI status**

Most of our export destinations do apply zoning and should accept to import poultry products from all French departments except “Nord” (59).

In accordance with Chapter 10.4 Article 10.4.6 of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code in its revised version, voted on May 29, 2021 and published on the OIE website, and in the absence of a new outbreak, this department could recover its free status 28 days after the completion of stamping-out and disinfection operations in this outbreak, and if no other outbreak elsewhere in France, France could recover its free HPAI status.