



USDA Issues Updates to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Fall Plan

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) today issued updates to its Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Fall Plan. The updates include additional detail around reimbursement for any virus elimination activities and the results from an August 2015 industry survey on preparedness. APHIS has also finalized its vaccination policy, which was previously released as a draft policy. These updates will help APHIS, states, industry and producers to be even better prepared to address the HPAI virus if it returns this winter or spring.

In the original fall plan, released in September 2015, APHIS outlined its intent to use a flat rate reimbursement for virus elimination activities (cleaning, disinfecting) on infected properties. However, the details were still being finalized. The updated plan provides greater detail about how flat rate reimbursement will work. APHIS will provide a flat rate to the producer, based upon the type of facility and the number of birds in the flock. The flat rates are based upon averages and lessons learned during the spring outbreak. They cover the cost of barn preparation, dry cleaning and heat disinfection. The flat rates are:

- Turkey \$3.55 / bird
- Layer \$6.45/ bird
- Broiler \$1.15 / bird (This is an estimate based on industry averages because no broiler flocks were affected in the previous outbreak)

The producer will be able to use the funds provided to do the work themselves or to hire an outside contractor. They can also use the flat rate money to help fund alternate effective virus elimination methods after consultation with APHIS representatives.

The survey on industry preparedness was in progress when the original version of the plan was published, so APHIS is including the results in today's update. The survey found that the poultry industry has made important efforts in implementing preparedness and response capabilities for future HPAI cases. However, APHIS is recommending some additional actions, such as increasing the use of premises IDs and having these entered in APHIS' emergency database, which would greatly facilitate response activities.

The original fall plan included a draft vaccination policy, which has since been updated and finalized over the past several months to clarify a few points. The policy updates include:

- Clarifying that while USDA will cover the cost of purchasing vaccine, it will not incur the costs associated with administering the vaccine.
- Clarifying that should USDA decide to vaccinate, there may be justification for not vaccinating certain commercial subpopulations within an area, such as short-lived birds (broilers, ducks) or primary breeders that are under high biosecurity or compartmentalization
- Clarifying that surveillance testing for layer flocks would be through serological testing of vaccinates and dead bird surveillance using rRT-PCR followed by confirmatory testing at NVSL.

The changes APHIS made to the HPAI fall plan are important and support continued preparation for any future HPAI outbreak that might occur. The current version of the plan is available at the top of our [Avian Influenza Web page](#).