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National Disease Control Centre

Avian Influenza Update

Number 12 of 2020

Avian Influenza Alert Number 12 of 2020

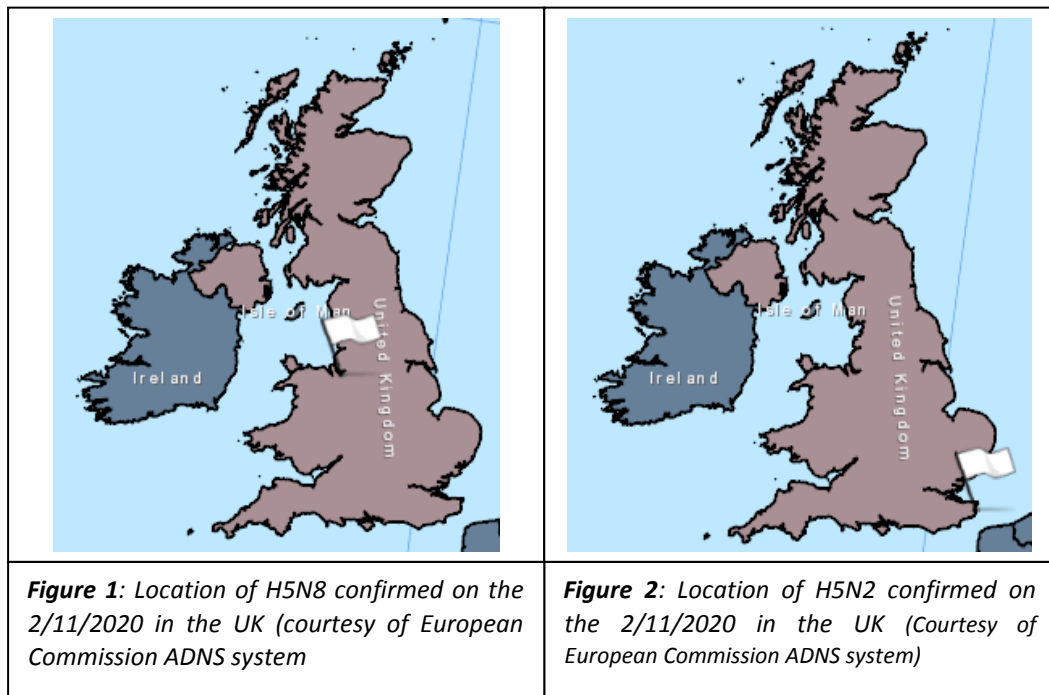
Since the Avian Influenza Alert Number 11 of 2020 which was published on the 28/10/2020 outbreaks of Avian influenza have been confirmed in mainland Europe and in the United Kingdom. Poultry owners throughout Ireland should ensure that strict biosecurity measures are implemented to prevent infections of their flocks. Wild bird deterrents such as netting should be used on holdings to prevent wild birds. Please follow advice and links provided below on this document.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N8 in the United Kingdom

- On the 2nd November 2020, Highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N8) has been confirmed in a poultry flock at a premises near Frodsham in Cheshire (see figure 1 below).
- 13,500 birds have been affected and will be humanely culled to limit the spread of the disease
- 3km and 10km temporary control zones have been implemented around the infected site to limit the risk of the disease spreading.

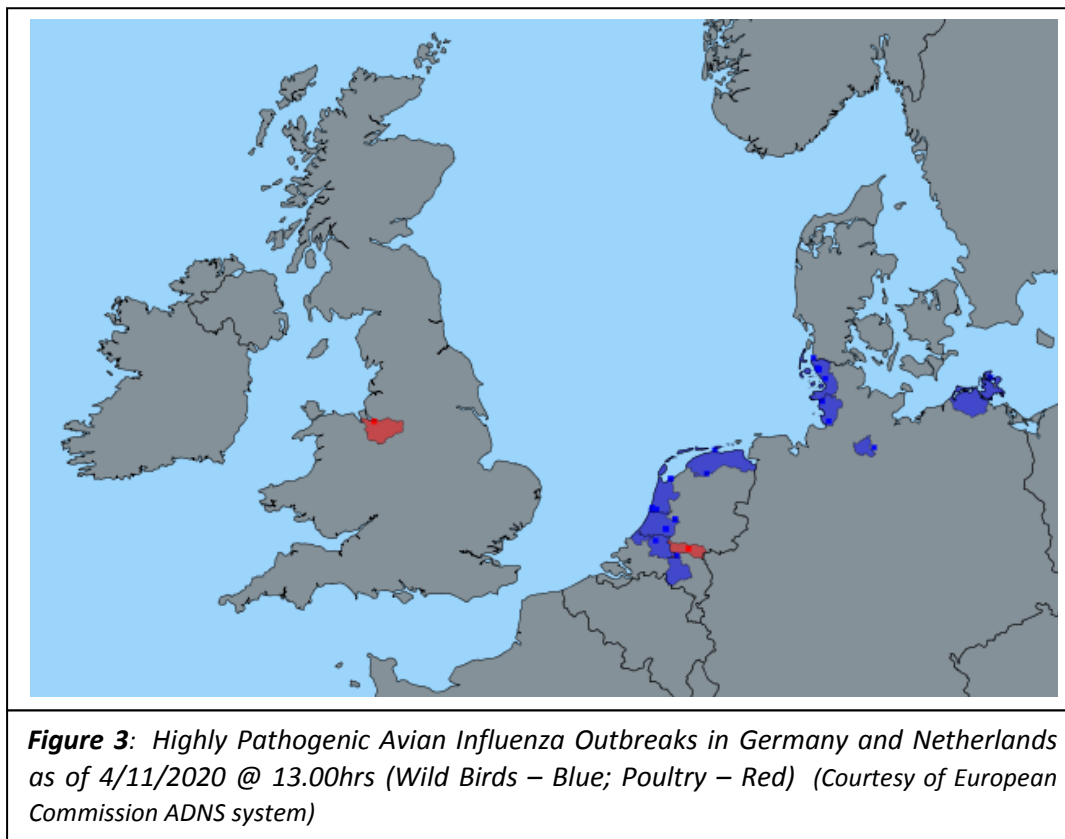
Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N2 in the United Kingdom

- On the 2nd November, Low pathogenic avian influenza was confirmed in the UK on a small scale mixed poultry farm in Kent County (See figure 2 below).
- A total of 416 birds have been affected (species include ducks, chickens, geese, swans, pigeons, rhea and guinea fowl)



Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N8 in Mainland Europe

- Since the 20th October 2020 there have been a large number of notifications confirming the presence of H5N8 in wild birds in the Netherlands (see figure 3 below)
- On the 29th October the Netherlands also confirmed H5N8 on a poultry holding with a Broiler Parent Flock in Gelderland. 35,750 birds were affected and humanely culled to prevent further spread of the disease.
- In addition there have been several notifications from Germany confirming the presence of H5N8 in wild birds (see figure 3 below)
- Wild Bird Species involved include: Eurasian wigeon, Mute swan, Greylag goose, Cormorant, Barnacle goose, Curlew, Eurasian buzzard, Peregrine falcon, White tailed eagle, Cane goose.



Risk to Ireland regarding Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N8

- **The disease poses no food safety risk for consumers. Properly cooked poultry and poultry products, including eggs are safe to eat.**
- From October onwards each year we enter into the high risk period for Avian Influenza in Ireland. Colder weather and decreasing daylight can extend the survival time of Avian influenza viruses in the environment
- This is due to the fact that migratory wild birds, the natural hosts of many avian influenza viruses, start to arrive in large numbers to overwinter here.

- Migratory wild birds are known to carry the H5N8 subtype of Avian influenza and this can increase the level of risk for a potential outbreak of Avian influenza in Ireland
- HPAI H5N8 is a notifiable disease both in Ireland and to the European Commission and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)
- Any potential outbreak of HPAI H5N8 in poultry in Ireland would impact our international trade for poultry and poultry products
- The disease is highly contagious for birds, but risk of transmission to humans is considered very low

What can poultry owners do to reduce the risk of avian influenza?

- 1. Be vigilant-** Monitor your birds carefully for any clinical signs of disease. If in doubt contact your veterinary practitioner for advice. Signs of avian influenza include:

- Death/high mortalities in a flock
- Depression/lethargy
- Loss of appetite
- Respiratory distress such as gaping beak, coughing, sneezing, gurgling, rattling
- Blue discolouration of combs, wattles, neck and throat
- Diarrhoea
- Reduced egg production or no egg production

- 2. Biosecurity is key, here is the advice:**

People

- Wear disposable or dedicated outer clothing when in contact with your birds
- Wear boots that can be disinfected, disposable gloves and wash hands after contact with poultry
- Only allow essential personnel access to your birds.

Buildings and equipment

- Regularly clean and disinfect hard surfaces such as paths and walkways
- Provide clean boot washing and disinfection facilities at all entrances/exits and ensure that people use them
- Clean and disinfect any vehicles or equipment that comes into contact with the birds after use
- Have suitable pest control in place.

Wild birds

- Minimise access to the flock by wild birds
- Feed and water birds inside or at least under cover
- Clean up any waste feed in outdoor areas frequently
- Consider using netting or wild bird decoys or deterrents to keep wild birds away from poultry areas.

Management

- Keep ducks and geese separate to other poultry species if possible
- Register your birds with DAFM so you can receive important information in the event of an increased risk.

Further information for poultry owners and stakeholder groups:

Fact sheets giving biosecurity advice for each of the main poultry categories are available at the following link:

https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian_influenza/clinicalsignsandleaflets/

To register a poultry flock please see:

https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian_influenza/poultryregistration/

RVO contact details

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/contact/>

List of target species of wild birds for AI surveillance

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/animalhealthwelfare/diseasecontrols/avianinfluenzabirdflu/informationonwildbirds/ListOfWildBirdSpeciesForTargetedAIsurveillance170118.pdf>

European Commission

https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/control-measures/avian-influenza_en

DAFM Contingency Planning for Avian influenza

DAFM has well established early warning systems and contingency measures in place for avian influenza. A summary of these measures can be found at:

https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian_influenza/legislationcontingencyplanning/

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