

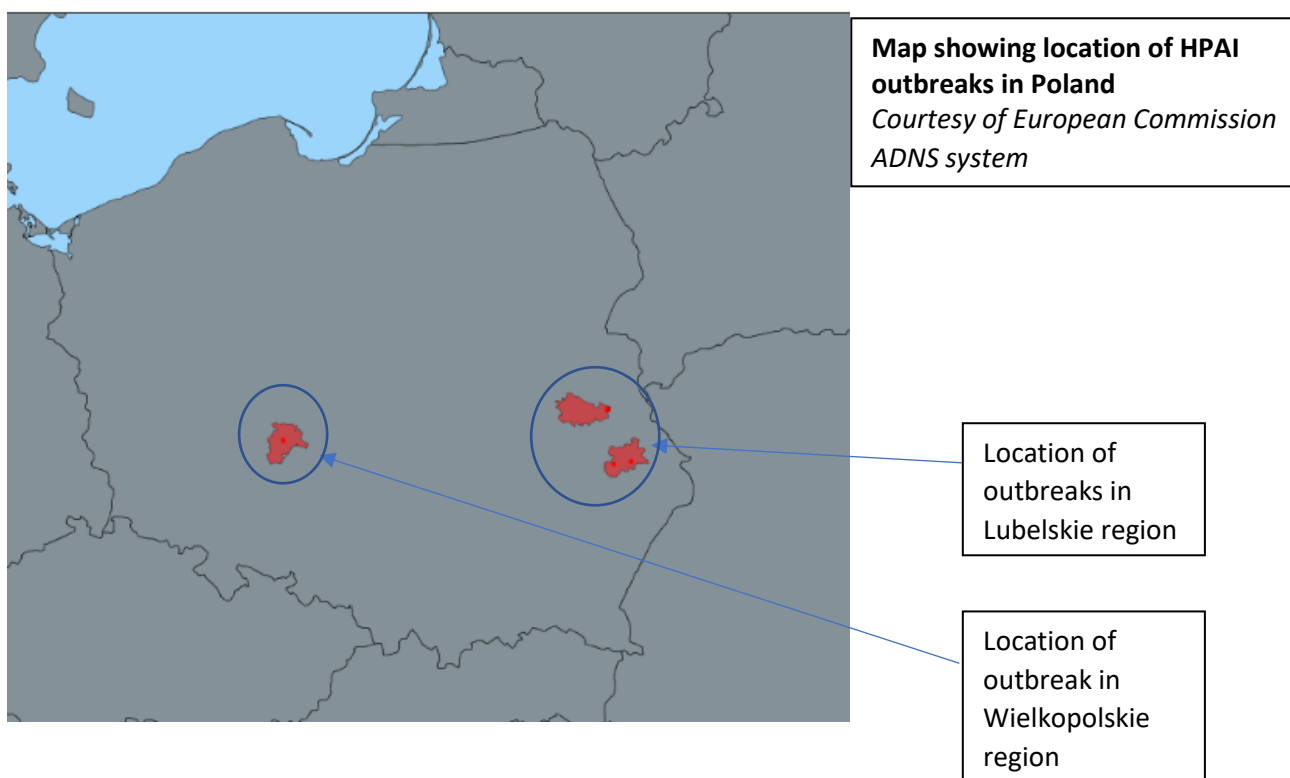


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**AI Alert: 01/2020**

**H5N8 in Poland**

- Nine outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N8 have been confirmed in Poland since the 31/12/2019, seven in commercial poultry flocks and two in backyard flocks.
- The first outbreak occurred in the Lubelskie region in the east of Poland in a flock of 12000 turkeys.
- Seven further outbreaks have been confirmed in the Lubelskie region, five of which were in commercial flocks (four turkey flocks and one guinea fowl) and two in backyard flocks.
- A further outbreak in a commercial flock of 36000 laying hens has been confirmed in the Wielkopolskie region in the western part of the country.
- The source of the infection has yet to be identified but an investigation by Polish authorities is ongoing.
- Disease control measures according to Directive 2005/94/EC have been implemented including killing of the infected flocks and disposal of the carcasses.
- The map below shows the locations of the outbreaks in Poland.



This outbreak represents the first outbreak of HPAI H5N8 in this winter season, the last outbreak of H5N8 occurring in Bulgaria in April 2019. In 2016/2017 HPAI H5N8 was responsible for an extended epidemic of avian influenza in both poultry and wild birds which spread across 23 European member states including Ireland, where 12 cases in wild birds were confirmed.



### Advice to flock owners

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) urges flock owners including backyard flock owners and other stakeholders to remain vigilant to the threat of avian influenza especially during the current high risk period for the disease that is associated with the presence of wild migratory birds and cold weather conditions.

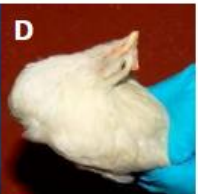

Poultry owners should implement strict biosecurity on their premises, particularly in relation to minimising contact with wild birds and ensuring wild birds do not have access to bird feeding areas or feed stores.

Flock owners should also monitor their birds for signs of avian influenza and if they suspect disease they must report it immediately to DAFM. The clinical signs of avian influenza are:



**How to recognise avian influenza**



A & B: Swollen head, and discharges; blue discoloration of wattle and comb



C: Ruffled feathers. D: Twisting of head and neck



E & F: Blue discoloration of shanks

**Clinical signs of avian influenza**

Symptoms may include any of the following:

**Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI)**

- Depression
- Loss of appetite and excessive thirst
- Cessation of egg laying
- Respiratory signs (coughing, sneezing)
- Ruffled feathers
- Nervous signs (drooping wings, dragging legs, twisting of the head and neck, circling, complete paralysis)
- Swelling and blue discoloration of combs and wattles
- Blue discoloration of shanks
- Diarrhoea
- Sudden death
- Mortality rates up to 100%

**Low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI)**

- Mild respiratory disease
- Depression
- Drop in egg production

**Other key biosecurity measures for AI include:**

- Only allow essential personnel to come into contact with poultry
- Implement high level of biosecurity around movement of personnel, vehicles, equipment on to farms
- Implement and all in all out policy for poultry
- Discourage wild birds from poultry premises and prevent direct contact with poultry
- Feed poultry indoors or under cover where possible.

**NDCC & Border Inspection Posts Division****08/01/2020****Further information:**

DAFM has a wide variety of biosecurity resources for avian influenza- please see:

[https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian\\_influenza/biosecurityadvice/](https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian_influenza/biosecurityadvice/)

To register a poultry flock please see:

[https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian\\_influenza/poultryregistration/](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](https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/control-measures/avian-influenza_en)