



16 January 2013

(13-0277)

Page: 1/2

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: Spanish

**COMMUNICATION REGARDING TWO NEW CASES OF HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN  
INFLUENZA IN THE STATE OF AGUASCALIENTES, MEXICO**

COMMUNICATION FROM MEXICO

The following communication, dated 15 January 2013, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Mexico.

1. Following activities to control and eradicate the most recent outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza serotype H7N3 and in particular the most recent positive case in August 2012 in the north-eastern part of the State of Jalisco, passive and active surveillance for this disease was strengthened. On 3 January 2013, more than 133 days after the last report of a new case, the National Agriculture and Food Health, Safety and Quality Service (SENASICA) was informed of an increase in mortality and a decrease in egg production on a commercial layer farm in the State of Aguascalientes, which led to the detection of two new cases.
2. The diagnosis was made by the SENASICA reference laboratory and the result was confirmed by a viral isolation test. Timely notification from the farmer and surveillance activities allowed for the immediate depopulation of the two affected production units, which means that both of the outbreaks identified are now closed. The OIE was notified on 8 January 2013.
3. The first outbreak occurred on a commercial layer farm with a population of 146,755 birds aged 21-80 weeks, of which 2,990 were identified as sick and 740 as dead. Clinical signs were conjunctivitis, edema, cyanosis, and palpebral, comb and chin swelling, as well as opisthotonos and sudden death. Additionally, during post-mortem inspections, haemorrhages were identified in trachea, lungs and tonsils.
4. The second outbreak was detected during active epidemiological surveillance conducted in the same Mexican State. The virus was isolated on another commercial layer farm with a population of 138,000 birds over 81 weeks old, which was also depopulated. In both cases, facilities and equipment were cleaned and disinfected and hen manure destroyed. After depopulation, sentinel birds will be introduced in order to confirm the absence of infection and viral circulation.
5. Active and passive epidemiological surveillance continues at national level, and the relevant epidemiological investigation is ongoing.
6. Control measures: anti-epidemic measures included the vaccination of laying and breeding hens within the zone around the outbreaks and the buffer zone, and the strengthening of biosecurity and the movement control of poultry goods:
  - (a) stamping out of 284,755 laying hens;
  - (b) quarantine;
  - (c) movement control within the country of birds, poultry products and byproducts;

- (d) epidemiological/diagnostic analysis of the situation;
- (e) zoning;
- (f) disinfection of infected premises/establishments.

7. In the affected production units, 284,755 laying hens were depopulated, while in the zone around the outbreaks and the buffer zone, vaccination controlled by the health authority is permitted. Vaccines may only be distributed with official authorization from SENASICA.

8. Mexico requests that WTO Members notify the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures of any measure imposed on imports of poultry products and byproducts originating in Mexico, in accordance with the terms of Article 7 and Annex B of the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement), and comply in full with the other transparency requirements laid down in this Agreement (such as allowing comments).

9. Furthermore, with a view to avoiding greater repercussions on trade in poultry products, Mexico proposes the following:

- Members should adhere to OIE guidelines - which permit the importation of products and byproducts that have undergone heat treatment to eliminate the virus and which provide for compartmentalization - and take measures restricting imports from the affected municipalities without imposing a ban on exports from the rest of Mexican territory;
- Members with which Mexico does NOT trade in poultry products should refrain from issuing and publishing import bans on Mexican products.

10. The Government of Mexico will continue to issue the relevant reports on disease emergence and resurgence in a proper and timely fashion, in accordance with its OIE commitments, with a view to ensuring the transparency of its animal health status.

11. This communication is being made for reasons of transparency under Article 7 and Annex B of the SPS Agreement, and is without prejudice to Mexico's rights and obligations under that Agreement.

---