



APHIS Safety and Health: A Renewed Emphasis

Fraser Owens, DVM
Senior Staff Veterinarian
National Center for Animal Health
Emergency Management (NCAHEM)



Overview

- Have considerations for safety and health during an AI response changed?
- What events have led to this change?
- How have they changed?
- What is being done by APHIS (and others) to address these concerns?



Precipitating Events

- Emergence of HPAI H5N1 as a zoonotic disease in Asia (1996)
- Re-emergence of HPAI H5N1 in Asia in 2003
- H7N7 HPAI (Netherlands) in 2003
- H7N3 HPAI (British Columbia) in 2004





Reinforcing Incidents

- 2002 H7N2 LPAI
Outbreak (VA)
- 2004 H7N2 LPAI
Outbreak (MD/DE)
- 2004 H5N2 HPAI
Incident (TX)
- 2007 H5N1 LPAI
(VA)





APHIS Safety and Health

- Developing guidelines for worker protection in response to an outbreak of HPAI began shortly after the re-emergence of H5N1 in Asia in 2003
- Looked to guidance developed by WHO, CDC, and OSHA
- Also worked closely with Federal Occupational Health (FOH) the Agency that administers our medical monitoring program



APHIS Safety and Health (cont.)

- Built on our existing Occupational Medical Monitoring Program (OMMP) and respiratory protection program
- OMMP already had provisions for respiratory medical clearances
- Interagency agreement with FOH was amended to add Tamiflu[®] and seasonal influenza vaccine to formulary



APHIS Safety and Health (cont.)

- Per APHIS Directive 6800.1:
 - Worker groups include:
 - Poultry workers; esp. culling, transport, disposal, disinfection
 - Wildlife biologists
 - Veterinary laboratory workers
 - Hand hygiene
 - N-95 respirator (min), eye protection, protective clothing, gloves, boots
 - Vaccination
 - Antivirals
 - Post-exposure health monitoring w/ notification of health care provider





Interim APHIS Plan on PPE in Preparation for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

- This plan is aligned with policies and authorities in several laws, regulations, or directives, including:
- APHIS Directive 6800.1
- APHIS VS Notice 580.18
- APHIS Safety and Health Manual
- Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, Section 5(a)(1), the General Duty Clause of the Act
- 29 CFR 1910 OSHA General Industry Regulations



Interim APHIS Plan on PPE (cont'd)

- **OBJECTIVE 1** - All specified employees must be medically cleared, fit-tested, and trained in the use of PPE, before potential exposure to infected poultry and wild birds or other animals.
- **OBJECTIVE 2** - Specified employees must know what personal protective equipment to have on-hand and where to get it.
- **OBJECTIVE 3** – In the event of an outbreak, APHIS will have adequate PPE supplies in stock and ready to deliver to outbreak sites.



Guidance Documents

- OSHA Guidance Update on Protecting Employees from Avian Flu (Avian Influenza) Viruses
- Interim Guidance for Protection of Persons Involved in U.S. Avian Influenza Outbreak Disease Control and Eradication Activities (CDC)
- Avian Influenza - Protecting Poultry Workers at Risk (OSHA & NIOSH)
- Delmarva Avian Influenza Joint Taskforce Interim Guidance



Questions?