

Avian 'Flu Update 5th January 2017

Since our last update confirming an outbreak of Avian Influenza at a turkey farm in Lincolnshire, a further case has been reported in ducks and chickens in **Carmarthenshire**. However, little has changed in regard to our *parrots or birds of prey*. The **H5N8** strain that caused this outbreak is highly pathogenic to poultry (i.e. it kills them quickly), but it is not of great risk to other avian species, nor humans. A **3 Km radius Protection Zone**, and a **10 Km radius Surveillance Zone** have been set up around the affected farms, meaning that all movement of poultry and gamebirds in these areas is controlled or supervised, but once again this does not apply to parrots. However, the countrywide **Prevention Zone** enforcement has been extended to **28th February 2017**, during which time “keepers of poultry and other captive birds should continue to keep their birds indoors, or take appropriate practical steps to keep them separate from wild birds.”

Whilst this still applies primarily to chickens, ducks and geese, nevertheless *all* bird-keepers should still be extra vigilant, especially if you live in the infected areas. Earlier posted comments still apply, and enhanced biosecurity is still advised. This includes disinfectant footbaths as well as good general standards of cleaning and disinfection, improved control of rodents, prevention of access to food and water by wild birds, and reducing human and vehicular traffic between sites where poultry are housed. Please keep an eye on our website/facebook page, or www.gov.uk. However, it is still sensible to take precautions, by bringing your birds into closed buildings where possible, or covering their aviaries with Perspex or plastic sheeting, as well as noting the biosecurity methods noted above.

All shows and sales involving game birds or poultry, or birds reared for meat or eggs, are currently *banned* in the UK. This ruling does *not* so far apply to parrots, but the situation could change rapidly.

Be vigilant and careful, but *don't panic!* Any findings of dead wild waterfowl (swans, ducks, geese, gulls) or groups of more than 5 other wild bird species must be reported to the Defra helpline at **03459 335577**. Further updates will be posted as we have them.

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