



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Marketing and  
Regulatory  
Programs

Washington, DC  
20250

Dr. Fred Gingrich  
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July 8, 2024

Dear Dr. Gingrich,

Thank you for the AABP's letter of June 7, including recommendations for the USDA's management of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) detections in livestock. The letter outlines AABP recommendation to clarify the current 30-day re-testing requirement in the [USDA Technical Notes](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#) by establishing criteria and animal movements for positive herds.

The USDA recently implemented an HPAI Dairy Herd Status Program, which provides for establishing herd status, as well as criteria for animal movements. As AABP noted in its letter, the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) recommends PCR as the confirmatory test to declare a herd positive for HPAI. USDA may use other testing types for screening, but relies on PCR to confirm positive detections, in alignment with WOAH standards.

In regards to AABP's movement recommendations, the Federal Order only prohibits the movement of lactating dairy cattle from a positive herd; movement of other classes of animals, including youngstock, is not restricted. Herd producers can work with their state animal health official and area veterinarian in charge to move lactating animals under certain circumstances to address animal welfare concerns. In addition, once established under the HPAI Dairy Herd Status program, a herd may regain monitored unaffected status after absence of illness and 2 consecutive weeks of negative PCR test results. These program stipulations allow herds with negative test results a quicker resumption of lactating animal movement, minimizing welfare, health, and economic consequences.

I appreciate our collaborative relationship with AABP and welcome continue discussion on the status program, animal movement, or other aspects of the HPAI response. We will consider your suggestions for clarification of text in the guidance documents for an upcoming revision. USDA holds regular calls with the cattle industry to provide updates and discuss the situation, and we welcome AABP's engagement in these calls. In the meantime, should you have any further questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact Dr. Michael Pruitt, HPAI Livestock National Incident Coordinator (NIC), at [mike.r.pruitt@usda.gov](mailto:mike.r.pruitt@usda.gov) or Dr. Melissa Lang, Deputy NIC, at [melissa.lang@usda.gov](mailto:melissa.lang@usda.gov).

Sincerely,

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