**AAAP Statement on H5N1**
**(AAAP H5N1 Task Force Committee, 07-12-2024)**
**(Approved by the AAAP Board, 7-23-2024)**

## Summary

The American Association of Avian Pathologists (AAAP) works to advance science-based knowledge, expertise, and education on poultry health, welfare, and food safety. To minimize the impact of genotype H5N1 genotype B3.13 ("H5 influenza") on the health and welfare of poultry and to protect human health, there are several policy issues and gaps that we believe need to be immediately addressed by regulatory and industry partners.

- Risk-based regional surveillance to efficiently generate the data needed to understand risks and mitigate them with consistent control strategies.
    - Current issue: The narrow requirement of pre-movement testing of only lactating dairy cows moving interstate is inadequate and overlooks risks that other classes of cattle pose to poultry. This approach does not sufficiently mitigate the risk to turkeys, broilers and egg laying hens near infected dairies.
- A consistent, risk-based national strategy that adheres to science-based principles of disease control to reduce further spread of H5 influenza.
    - Current issue: A national strategy that targets all potential hosts of H5 influenza is lacking and has led to continual spread of the virus.
- Epidemiologic studies and tools to understand connections among susceptible populations
    - Current issue: As this is an emerging outbreak, insufficient data have been available to identify transmission pathways and associated risk factors for H5 influenza spread (i.e., spread between dairies and poultry farms).
- Resolution of concerns that impede the utilization of vaccine needed to control the spread of H5 influenza
    - Current issue: The extensive and rapid dissemination of H5 influenza in dairy herds has created a new source of virus in livestock populations. Vaccine is an important tool to reduce disease spread within dairies and to other animals (i.e. poultry, swine, cats, etc.)
- Additional resource allocation to minimize the long-term impacts of H5 influenza on human health, food security and economic sustainability.
    - Current issue: The occurrence of H5 influenza in a new livestock species increases the demand for lab capacity, producer financial support, and veterinary resources.

A consistent and comprehensive strategy for H5 influenza management is essential to ensure the health and well-being of animals in all sectors and to mitigate economic impacts. This will also help reduce the risk of the virus potentially spreading to humans, safeguarding public health.

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