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HEALTH & CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Directorate D – Animal Health and Welfare  
Director

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**URGENT FAX – 921 (12/10/2009, 17:40)**

**To:** CVOs of all Member States + Norway, **Telephone:**  
Iceland, Croatia, Turkey, Switzerland +  
all Permanent Representations **Fax:**

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**Number of pages:** 2

**Subject:** **Highly pathogenic avian influenza of the H7 subtype confirmed in Spain**

**Message:**

The Spanish veterinary authorities have informed the Commission today of a confirmed outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza of the H7 subtype in a laying hen farm in the province of Guadalajara, autonomous region of Castilla-La Mancha.

On the farm 250.000 laying hens are kept, divided in four sheds and one for rearing. Suspicion of disease was raised on 9 October by a sharp increase of mortality in one shed (50%) and a mortality rate of about 4% (to be confirmed) in a second shed. Birds in the other sheds did not show any clinical signs of disease. The farm has immediately been placed under official surveillance and laboratory testing has been carried out which confirmed the presence of the of highly avian influenza virus of the H7 subtype. Already before confirmation of the disease control measures as laid down in Directive 2005/94/EC have been implemented. A 3-km protection zone and a 10-km surveillance zone have been established around the infected holding. Clinical investigations have been initiated on the holdings located in these zones. Culling of the birds present on the infected holding including safe disposal of the carcasses has commenced.

Epidemiological investigations to determine possible links to other holdings and the probable origin of the outbreak are ongoing.

The situation will be reviewed at the upcoming meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health scheduled for 16 October 2009.

I will keep you informed of further developments.

Yours sincerely,

  
Bernard Van Goethem