

Poultryhealth BYTES

Number: 204

Avian influenza XXII

Your own reference source on poultry health



AgroLogic

Ayurvet

Coventry Chemicals

Diamond V

Dupont/Danisco

Honeywell

Hubbard

Innovad

Interheat

Jansen

Lubing

Perstorp

R2 Agro

Special Nutrients

Wisium

Education, communication, public awareness and behavioural change

A key aspect of any disease control programme is the education of everyone working in poultry and allied industries, government staff and anyone else involved in the control programme. They need to know how avian influenza is introduced to the farm, how it is spread and how it can be controlled. This obviously includes the control of risky actions and behaviours and controlling aerosol and fomite spread of the virus and movements on to and between farms.

It is relatively easy to educate by the provision of knowledge, but a lot harder to change longstanding behaviours. For example, at village level it may be decided that all local chickens should be housed. This means switching feed from that which the bird scavenges to purchased feed. One can see why this could be hard to implement, as poverty is a major driver of behaviour.

Changes to production and marketing systems to give improved biosecurity

The highest risk of avian influenza for naïve birds is direct exposure to infected birds, so, obviously a key aspect of biosecurity is to stop this happening. There are two facets to this – keeping influenza inside infected premises and keeping it out of premises with healthy flocks.

Two areas to consider here are the sourcing of day old chicks and the taking of live birds off the farm to be processed or sold. The chick vehicle should come directly from the hatchery to the farm and vehicles coming to the farm to remove birds at the end of the cycle should not go near other poultry farms or live bird (wet) markets.