

Pandemic Postings

Current Alert Level: WHITE ([definition](#))
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Details of recently-reported poultry outbreaks

Russia OIE, 15/10/08. Two poultry outbreaks of H5N1 avian influenza have been retrospectively reported in Russia. Both occurred in 2007: an outbreak in a 5000-bird flock of backyard poultry in Rostovskaya Oblast on 12/12/07 (see [map](#)), and an outbreak in a 1500-bird flock of backyard poultry linked to a Moscow market on 19/02/07 (see [map](#)).

Background

Avian Influenza Outbreaks in Chickens, Bangladesh Biswas PK et al. *Emerg Infect Dis.* 2008 Dec; [Epub ahead of print, 31/10/08]. DOI: 10.3201/eid1412.071567. Results of investigation into epidemiology of outbreaks of avian influenza A virus (subtypes H5N1, H9N2) in chickens in Bangladesh. Transmission routes implicated included egg trays and vehicles from local live bird markets and larger live bird markets.

Vaccination strategies and vaccine formulations for epidemic and pandemic influenza control Kreijtz JHCM et al. *Hum Vaccines* 2009; 5 (3). [Epub ahead of print, 30/10/08]. Review of recent developments "that will contribute to a more rapid availability of sufficient doses of highly efficacious and safe pandemic influenza vaccines. The new developments include the establishment of novel methods to prepare vaccine strains, novel production technologies and the use of novel adjuvants and alternative vaccine formulations." [taken from abstract]

The international response to highly pathogenic avian influenza: science, policy and politics Scoones I, Forster P. STEPS Centre, University of Sussex, 23/10/08. This paper from the University of Sussex-based STEPS Centre (Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability) provides an analysis of the global response to avian influenza H5N1. "The paper asks: what lessons can we learn from this experience, and what does this mean for future efforts to respond to emerging infectious diseases under the One World, One Health initiative? The paper explores three core narratives that have shaped the response: one focuses on veterinary issues, another on human public health and a third on pandemic preparedness. All have common characteristics, emphasising outbreak control and containment. Missing dimensions are identified, including a lack of attention to underlying disease drivers, issues of poverty and equity and broader questions of access and governance. The paper examines how discourses of security and risk pervade the discussions, affecting how the response has played out. The paper concludes with a discussion of the emerging challenges, including the implications for organisational architectures, professional training and programme implementation." [taken from abstract]

Current global avian influenza activity
 Reported outbreaks of highly-pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 in poultry 11 - 15 October 2008.² No cases of human infection with avian influenza H5N1 have been reported² since 10 September 2008. The complete list of human cases and poultry outbreaks to date can be found on the [ARPHS website](#).

	Human ¹ cases	deaths	Poultry ² outbreaks
Russia	-	-	2
Total	-	-	2

Notes:

- 1 As reported by the [World Organisation for Animal Health \(OIE\)](#)
- 2 On the [World Health Organization](#) website

Background (contd)

WHO's draft pandemic flu guidance revises phases [CIDRAP News, 24/10/08](#). The World Health Organization (WHO) has drafted a revised pandemic influenza preparedness plan that updates the definitions of pandemic phases and puts more emphasis on the social and economic effects of a global epidemic, among other changes. The plan, intended to replace the existing one published in 2005, aims to present "simpler and more precise definitions" of the six pandemic phases and groups them to emphasize planning and preparedness considerations. The draft also defines "post-peak" and "possible new wave" phases. WHO plans to publish the final version in December 2008.

Responses to Avian Influenza and State of Pandemic Readiness - Fourth Global Progress Report [UN System Influenza Coordinator & The World Bank, 21/10/08](#). The fourth annual progress report from the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank states that so far this year no new countries have been hit by H5N1 avian influenza outbreaks, and fewer previously affected countries have reported fresh outbreaks, but the threat of an influenza pandemic has not changed. A summary of the report is available at the following [link](#).

Highly pathogenic avian influenza virus (H5N1) infection in red foxes fed infected bird carcasses. [Reperant LA et al. Emerg Infect Dis.](#) 2008 Dec; [Epub ahead of print, 31/10/08]. The authors of this paper report a study to determine whether red foxes are susceptible to infection with HPAI virus (H5N1). Three 3 foxes were infected intratracheally. They excreted virus pharyngeally for 3-7 days and became ill with severe pneumonia, myocarditis, and encephalitis. Foxes were also fed infected bird carcasses, and these foxes excreted virus pharyngeally for 3-5 days, but only mild or no pneumonia developed. The authors claim that the study demonstrates that red foxes fed bird carcasses infected with HPAI virus (H5N1) can excrete virus while remaining free of severe disease, thereby potentially playing a role in virus dispersal.