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ZIMBABWE

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Communique on the Current HPAI outbreak in Zimbabwe

No new cases had been recorded since the first report in May and selective stamp out at Irvines' Lanark Poultry breeding farm near Harare. The Veterinary competent authority was preparing the establishment to repopulate when it appeared that manipulation of composted manure for removal, precipitated a fresh incident in an adjacent sub-unit of a surveillance flock. Forty thousand birds therefore had to be destroyed under veterinary supervision. This has meant the renewal of the quarantine order on the property, beginning 26th of July, 2017.

Intensive surveillance of this index property therefore continues with sampling for virus testing every 14 days, daily clinical monitoring of the flocks as well as thorough investigation of all mortalities on site. All poultry properties in the vicinities of this index property are under close monitored by Veterinary Services.

Clinical surveillance of all commercial flocks and live bird markets is on-going for early detection. Public awareness is being conducted through our animal health extension service.

Movement of poultry now requires to be done on veterinary permit stipulating conditions for movement. The public are being advised to exercise caution on all bird movements, similarly also the use and transfer of poultry manure and other products considered of high risk.

Only approved establishments will be authorised by the Veterinary Authority to bring birds to the August Harare Agricultural Show, later this month. The conditions for approval will be communicated in due course through the various Veterinary stations.

It is only strict biosecurity measures on-farm, and other points in the supply chain, which will enable us to overcome this disease involving:

- keeping poultry Away from areas frequented by wild fowls such as near water bodies or vleis
- desisting from keeping on the premises elements which may attract wild birds including poultry feed placed outside buildings and maintaining trees and bushes on which wild birds can perch
- maintaining strict control over access to flocks by vehicles, people and equipment
- ensuring sanitation of property, poultry houses and equipment
- avoiding introduction of birds of unknown disease status into the flock
- reporting any bird illnesses and deaths to the Veterinary Services
- ensuring appropriate sanitary disposal of manure, litter, feathers and dead poultry

It is not feasible to destroy wild birds which are part of our ecology. Wild birds found dead should be treated with caution as they may harbour the virus which can still affect domesticated birds and at times, the handlers. It is advisable to report any suspicious findings of dying wild birds and domesticated poultry to the nearest Veterinarian or Veterinary paraprofessional for further investigation and institution of sanitary control measures.

The following are alternative sources of day-old-chicks which have remained clear of HPAI so far: Charles Stewart, Zim-Avian, Kudu Creek, All-Avian, Peppertree, Novatek, Hukuru chicks, Dr. Henn and Supachicks.

Imports of hatching eggs continue to be processed on case-by-case basis from establishments presenting the lowest risk.

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