



## **SINGAPORE'S POULTRY & EGG SUPPLY UNAFFECTED BY OUTBREAK OF BIRD FLU IN KOTA BHARU, KELANTAN**

### **AVA STEPS UP VIGILANCE AGAINST BIRD FLU**

**9 March 2017:** Malaysia's Department of Veterinary Services (DVS) has reported an outbreak of H5N1 avian flu (bird flu) in a village of Kota Bharu, Kelantan.

2. The Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority (AVA) would like to assure the public that poultry and poultry products in Singapore are safe for consumption. The current outbreak in Kelantan does not have any impact on Singapore's poultry and egg supply as Singapore only allows import of poultry and eggs from the disease free zones in Malaysia – Johor, Malacca, Negri Sembilan, Selangor and Perak. We do not import poultry and eggs from Kelantan as it is not an approved source.

3. AVA will continue to work closely with Malaysia's DVS to ensure that poultry and eggs imported do not compromise public and animal health.

#### Measures to keep out bird flu

4. Nevertheless, in response to the outbreak of bird flu in Kelantan, AVA has stepped up existing measures to prevent the incursion of the disease.

5. Our existing measures include:

- Importing live birds, poultry and poultry products only from bird flu-free countries and zones
- Conducting inspection and sampling on imported live poultry and poultry products at points of entry and poultry slaughterhouses
- Ensuring that local poultry farms and slaughterhouses implement bio-security measures
- Conducting regular inspection and surveillance at local poultry farms, slaughterhouses and pet bird shops
- Conducting regular checks and surveillance on migratory birds as well as common birds such as crows, mynahs and pigeons
- Monitoring of free-roaming chickens

6. We have increased surveillance and inspections at the points of entry to prevent the incursion of the disease. We have also alerted local poultry farms to beef

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up biosecurity measures, such as not allowing non-essential visits to the farms and ensuring that their bird-proofing measures are intact.

7. While Singapore is free from bird flu, AVA will continue to monitor the situation, and work with stakeholders to prevent the incursion of bird flu into Singapore.

8. The public can visit our website at [www.ava.gov.sg](http://www.ava.gov.sg) for more information and updates on bird flu.

Accompanying pictures:



**Image 1:** AVA inspector conducting inspection on imported live poultry upon arrival at Tuas checkpoint

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**Image 2:** AVA inspectors conducting inspection on imported live poultry upon arrival at Tuas checkpoint

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## **Fact sheet on AVA's efforts to keep out bird flu**

Singapore currently imports about 35% of chicken and 93% of ducks from Malaysia. There are other sources of poultry including Brazil and the United States of America. 76% of our egg supply comes from Malaysia while our local farms account for the remaining 24% of our egg supply.

2 While Singapore is free from bird flu, it is endemic in the region. Thus, AVA remains vigilant to safeguard Singapore from bird flu. To this end, AVA has put in place precautionary measures including source accreditation, import control, routine inspection and surveillance at points of entry, local farms, poultry slaughterhouses and pet shops.

### **Monitoring of import of poultry and ornamental birds**

3 To ensure food safety, meat and eggs, and their products (including live poultry) can only be imported from accredited establishments in approved countries. Only poultry and poultry products from bird flu-free countries and zones are allowed. The accreditation process involves reviewing the country regulations, the food establishments' production systems and practices to ensure compliance with international animal health and food safety standards.

4 Upon arrival, all live poultry and egg consignments are subjected to inspection and sampling at points-of-entry and slaughterhouses as part of our routine surveillance and inspection programme. This is to verify that supply farms are free from bird flu, as well as to ensure that the poultry and eggs are safe for consumption.

5 Ornamental birds can only be imported from bird flu-free countries, and must undergo a 21-day pre-export isolation in the country of export. The birds must be tested free from bird flu before import. Upon arrival in Singapore, the birds are checked again for clinical signs of diseases, and samples are taken to be tested for bird flu, amongst other diseases.

### **Monitoring of local farms and poultry slaughterhouses, pet shops and wild birds**

6 As part of our routine surveillance programme, local poultry slaughterhouses (PSHs) and farms (poultry and ornamental birds) are closely monitored, regularly inspected and sampled to ensure compliance with our animal health and food safety standards and requirements. Samples from these premises are tested by AVA for a wide range of diseases and threats such as avian influenza, microbes and chemicals.

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7 PSHs and farms are required to ensure biosecurity of the premises. Biosecurity measures include disinfecting all vehicles at the premises' entrance, implementing measures to keep wild birds away from the premises and keeping a registry of daily movement of people and vehicles into and out of the premises. Members of the public are not allowed to visit these establishments.

8 PSHs and farms are required to inform AVA of high mortality in their poultry population or if the birds show signs of bird flu. They are required to adopt a trace-back system to ensure that poultry or poultry products can be traced back to the source.

9 For pet shops that sell birds, inspections are regularly carried out by AVA. During these inspections, samples are taken to test for bird flu. AVA officers would also look for signs of clinical disease.

10 In addition, AVA has a surveillance programme in place for wild birds in Pulau Ubin, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve and Singapore Botanic Gardens. Samples are collected from wild birds to test for bird flu. We also work with Wildlife Reserves Singapore on surveillance.

11 We also work closely with Town Councils and their contractors, and requested for them to report to AVA if they come across birds dying from unknown causes or in large numbers.

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