

DEFRA's call for all visitors to Chelford Market May 7th

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.agriculture.poultry/2007-05/msg00198.html>

- *From:* "Jill" <news@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Wed, 30 May 2007 12:36:21 +0100
-

http://www.macclesfield-express.co.uk/news/s/228/228351_bird_flu_fears.html

POULTRY keepers, buyers and sellers, who attended the early May Bank Holiday sales at Chelford Market 24 days ago, were today urged to contact government farming watchdogs in the wake of a bird flu outbreak.

Defra – the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – are appealing to anyone present at the auction on Monday, May 7, to contact them after 15 hens in North Wales died when they were infected with avian influenza.

Officials – who stress the disease is the H7N2 strain rather than the more deadly H5N1 virus – have traced the 15 affected Rhode Island Reds to the agricultural centre in Chelford.

Advertisement

And now they need to track down the 140 chicken sellers, not to mention the buyers, who were in attendance on a particularly busy Bank Holiday sale.

Bosses at Chelford Market last night (Tuesday) confirmed no-one working there was showing signs of the disease and the Health Protection Agency stress the risk to the general public is low.

Regular Monday sales of poultry have been suspended until the all-clear is announced, but it was business as usual at the agricultural centre this week as livestock shows continued.

Partner at Frank Marshall, Gwyn Williams, said: "Anything that removes part of our business is difficult, but this is not on the same scale as when all livestock sales were shut down between February 2001 and February 2002 because of Foot and Mouth disease.

"All of the 541 poultry pens are cleaned and disinfected at the end of every sale. We are very tight on anything that appears ill, whatever the animal, and there was no sign at all that day."

"We are very proud of our record here for welfare and keep a close eye on this."

DEFRA's call for all visitors to Chelford Market May 7th

The mild form of avian influenza was confirmed 70 miles away at a smallholding in Conwy, after owners called in vets when their Rhode Island Red hens began to die.

A total of 30 chickens have been slaughtered after 15 birds died and a one kilometre restriction zone was in place.

Tests were also underway at a second farm on the Llyn Peninsula. Both bought birds from Chelford on May 7.

At the time of going to press, four people tested positive for bird flu – two in North Wales and two in Merseyside – although others, including a child at a primary school linked to the Conwy farm, are being offered treatment. No-one is seriously ill.

A Defra spokeswoman said: "Following confirmation of Low Pathogenic H7N2 Avian Influenza in the flock, we amended the general licence to specify that chickens or ducks must not be taken to bird gatherings.

"This temporary measure will be kept actively under review over the next few days as the disease situation becomes clearer."

She added as part of the tracing exercise and epidemiological investigation to determine the source of the outbreak and any spread, Defra want to hear from anyone who purchased from or supplied to Chelford Market on Monday, May 7, or any poultry keeper who visited the market on that day whose birds have since become ill.

Mr Williams said there were around 140 vendors at the sale from all over the country, with many different purchasers.

He said: "We don't know which hens were the carriers but Defra want to contact anyone who was there. We have given contact details of all buyers and sellers on that day, which was busy because it was a bank holiday.

"As a responsible measure we cancelled the sale this Monday (May 28) and we will review the situation as of next week. Defra amended the licence restricting sales of chicken and ducks. We were not compelled to cancel the sale, we could have gone ahead with other types of birds, but decided not to."

He said they were not particularly worried about future sales, and added: "This is a very low pathogenic strain and I think it's more precautionary than anything else.

"Defra are trying to place the source of the infection but there is no ready way of identifying birds. They could have been bought at Chelford but we don't know yet whether the birds that came through here were infected or carriers."

DEFRA's call for all visitors to Chelford Market May 7th

A spokeswoman for Defra said Animal Health officials visited Chelford Market to offer advice to people and farmers if they had been at the sale earlier this month. The cage and aviary bird sale will go ahead on Wednesday, June 6.

a.. POULTRY farmers who were at the May 7 sale at Chelford Market should contact Jenny Kirby at the Macclesfield Express on 01625 424445 ext 30, or the DEFRA helpline on 08459 33557.
Jenny Kirby

First published by the Macclesfield Express

regards
Jill Bowis

Pure bred utility chickens and ducks
Housing; Equipment, Books, Videos, Gifts
Herbaceous; Herb and Alpine nursery
Working Holidays in Scotland
<http://www.kintaline.co.uk>

regards
Jill Bowis

Pure bred utility chickens and ducks
Housing; Equipment, Books, Videos, Gifts
Herbaceous; Herb and Alpine nursery
Working Holidays in Scotland
<http://www.kintaline.co.uk>

.