Economic Impact of Avian Influenza

Since December 2014, the USDA has confirmed several cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5 in the Pacific, Central, and Mississippi flyways (or migratory bird paths). The disease has been found in wild birds, as well as in a few backyard and commercial poultry flocks. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers the risk to people from these HPAI H5 infections to be low. No human cases of these HPAI H5 viruses have been detected in the United States, Canada, or internationally.

168 Influenza findings have been reported since December, a majority of which have been turkeys and most recently layers. The HPAI H5N2 virus strain has been confirmed in several states along three of the four North American Flyways: Pacific, Central and Mississippi. The latest findings can be found at [http://go.osu.edu/AIupdate](http://go.osu.edu/AIupdate).

The novel HPAI H5N1 virus is not the same virus as the H5N1 virus found in Asia, Europe and Africa that has caused some human illness. This HPAI H5N1 strain is a new mixed-origin virus that combines the H5 genes from the Asian HPAI H5N1 virus with N genes from native North American avian influenza viruses found in wild birds.


Allison Sandve, University of Minnesota Extension, recently reported losses in poultry production and related businesses due to avian influenza are estimated at $309.9 million in Greater Minnesota, according to a newly released emergency economic impact analysis from University of Minnesota Extension.

Using economic modeling, analysts determined that for every million dollars in direct losses, the estimated ripple effect leads to $1.8 million in overall economic losses, including $450,000 in wages. Ripple effect losses stem from factors including reduced wage-earner and business-to-business spending.
The Extension analysis put losses of poultry production--both turkeys and egg-laying chickens--at $113 million as of May 11.

"These projections represent where we stand as of May 11," said Brigid Tuck, Extension senior analyst, who led the study. "If the virus affects more farms, as we have seen since May 11, the impact levels will rise. If barns stay empty for another cycle of poultry production, these numbers could potentially double"


Producers are no longer thinking about “if” this will hit Ohio, but “when”. We hope the disease will miss us this spring but it has been predicted that the level of risk will be high each fall and spring for the next couple years as waterfowl migrate back and forth through our state.

The value of poultry sales in Ohio from the last census is $946,592,000. If we would experience a 50% loss of production in Ohio, I would estimate a ripple effect would be 1 billion dollars in overall economic losses, including $815,000 in wages.

No poultry on your farm - think about the effect on the demand for corn and soybean meal. If we would lose ½ of our poultry for a 6 month period of time you would reduce corn demand by 27,000,000 million bushels, the equivalent of 9% of our state corn production and soybeans would be about a 5,000,000 million bushel reduction.

For those with commercial poultry operations much planning and execution is necessary at this time including advanced biosecurity and disaster planning.

For more information about OSU Extension, Darke County, visit the Darke County OSU Extension web site at www.darke.osu.edu, the OSU Extension Darke County Facebook page or contact Sam Custer, at 937.548.5215.