

**State Conservation Commission
HPAI Conference Call & Webinar
September 16, 2015**

These notes were taken by PACD in order to capture discussion and information not covered on the PowerPoint presented during the webinar. They are accurate to the best of the recorder's ability. A PDF of the PowerPoint, titled *HPAI – Conservation Districts*, may be accessed, along with other handouts from the call, at <http://pacd.org/ai>.

Dr. Craig Shultz provided a presentation on AI.

Commercial poultry production is hit the hardest, and PA has significant concentrations of commercial poultry production. He stressed that this could hit anywhere, not just in the areas of highest concentration, though those are the highest risk areas.

Down time is the worst cost for a production facility. The best case scenario is two months out of production and the worst is six months.

PA has good search capacity and good technical staff at PDA and they are working to get additional staff on board, as well.

The eradication and control process is regulated by the USDA and our actions will be based on a USDA response plan written by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).

Once the infection is confirmed, they identify an infected zone and inspect the surveillance zone. At this time, standards rise and there is more restriction of movement within the zone in order to contain the outbreak.

Depopulation comes first, then in-house composting or disposal. There are a variety of disposal methods depending on the situation. Foam is effective for floor birds but it is much more complicated for multiple deck birds.

The PA State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is prepared, and PDA has met with many other state agencies to discuss partnering on any potential outbreak.

The federal government does allow for indemnity payments to producers. Once a producer has a positive flock, he or she must sign an official flock plan. However, if producers can review the options for depopulation and disposal now, and consider the unique challenges that might exist on their farm, that will help prepare them, should this occur.

In MN, the entire south central area became a control zone, a quarantined area with restricted movement in and out. PA is planning, so that we are prepared for that *potential* eventuality.



Frank Schneider took over the presentation to discuss nutrient management ramifications. He stressed that there is a mandatory 72 hour quarantine even when you don't enter the poultry barns. He also noted that the quarantine order would, by necessity, take precedence over the environment in the event of an outbreak.

Greg Hostetter, PDA Deputy Secretary helped to answer questions from the group.

Question: What would conservation district involvement look like? District involvement will primarily be to help farmers complete an E&S plan in the case of burial. PDA may also ask the districts for assistance in locating poultry inside infected zones once a zone is identified. He suggested that, once PA enters into a response phase, districts keep track of the time spent on AI, for potential reimbursement.

Deputy Secretary Hostetter reported that they will be distributing a Hipath Producer Response Work Plan document. This document, which is one page, double-sided, should be provided to any poultry producers. They should complete both sides of the document.. This will help them think through how they might deal with an infection should it occur. He encouraged districts to take a look at that document and encourage producers to use this as a tool to plan ahead.

Frank Schneider noted that, though an E&S plan is required, DEP has said that they will not require an NPDES permit for E&S plans for burial related to AI. The plan does not need to be submitted for review and approval.

Question: How and when will districts be notified? Once a quarantine is set, the communications director will notify districts and others. The department might ask for support from the districts in the case of a large scale outbreak, but any such support would be entirely voluntary on any district's part.

Question: How will districts be involved with the burial of birds? The only responsibility for the district would be to help the producer create an E&S plan for burial, which would need to be kept on file.

USDA is strongly inclined to use composting wherever possible. It is preferred because they can confirm that the composting process has reached the necessary temperature to kill the virus.

Question: What if a district office is located within a quarantine area? Employees would report to work as usual. It is likely that the only restriction would be the suspension of any visits to farms within that area.

It was noted by a participant that individuals should also be mindful of contact with waterfowl, including areas such as parks and golf courses.

Notes taken by Molly Burns, PACD Executive Assistant & Meeting Planner