Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries,
Food Security and Nature

Experience with avian influenza vaccination in the Netherlands

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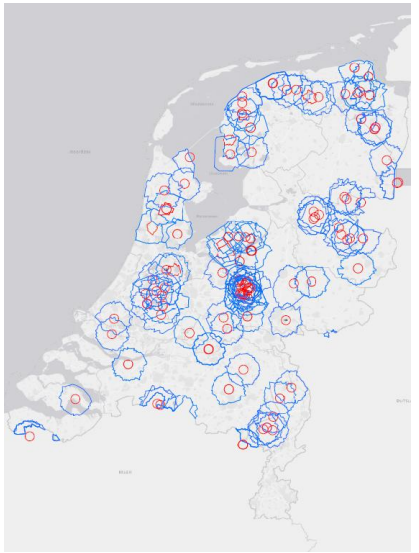
HPAI outbreaks in the Netherlands 2021-2024

- 2021: 11
- 2022: 98
- 2023: 10
- 2024: 2
- 2025: 4
- Total heads culled : 6,8 million birds
- Pre-emptive culling: 1,1 million birds

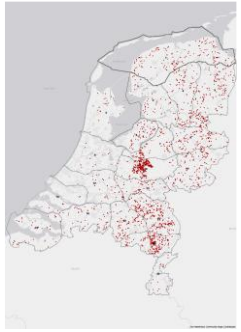
- More prevention needed



Restriction zones in 2022

Plan to intensify prevention of HPAI

- Action plan to intensify prevention of HPAI infections; launched 2023
- Joint action of ministry of Public Health and ministry of Agriculture
- Aim: reduce probability and impact of infections
- Three ‘one health’ chapters:
  - Public health: reduce chance of emergence of more zoonotic variants
  - Wild animals: adequate handling of wild animals with HPAI
  - Poultry holdings: measures to reduce the number of outbreaks and their impact
    - Vaccination
    - Biosecurity
    - New establishments wetland areas; extension in poultry dense area



Vaccination HPAI: step-by-step approach

- Aim: reduction number of outbreaks of HPAI in poultry
- Long term: large-scale vaccination programme poultry against HPAI
- Stepwise approach
  - Laboratory trial to assess efficacy 4 new vaccines
  - Field trial
    - vaccination of layers on two farms, housed regularly
    - test efficacy of vaccines applied under field conditions: scientific work →
    - 4 transmission trials HCU: different age of layers
    - eggs of vaccinated layers are destroyed (scientific experiment)
  - Pilot: 'real life'

Pilot (1)

- A vaccination pilot with a limited number of layer farms → 1 layer farm
- Goal of the pilot is to gain experience with:
  - vaccine application at hatchery
  - implementation of compulsory surveillance (DA (EU) 2023/361), registration, communication
  - marketing of eggs NL, labelling eggs, control on process
  - limiting impact of vaccination on trade
- Set up / preparations in close collaboration with poultry sector
- Information of several trade partners, e.g. Japan, US, UK

Pilot (2)

- Vaccine: MSD Innovax ND H5 (vector vaccine); European market access, evaluation by European Medicines Agency (EMA)
- Pilot under supervision of Competent Authority
- Vaccination at hatchery
- Day-old chicks raised in pullet farm
- At age of 18 weeks to end laying farm
- Egg production: 90 weeks
- Consumption eggs (1ste and 2nd choice) sold on Dutch market only
- Spent hens slaughtered and sold on Dutch market, or disposed (Dec ‘26)

Pilot (3)

- Before start of pilot, LVVN informed most important trade partners, the EC and the EU MS about the pilot:
  - guarantee that eggs from vaccinated hens would *not* be marketed in other countries
  - explanation of the surveillance programme (compulsory EU legislation: weekly virology, monthly serology
- No trade limitations

Pilot (4)

- Eggs are now produced and marketed on Dutch market
- No trade limitations
- End of pilot December 2026

Next steps: 2025 onwards

- Scenarios for optimal vaccination programme Netherlands
  - Regions at risk: wetlands northern part; poultry dense area central part of Netherlands
  - Poultry type at risk: layer hens, ducks
- Adjustments of the surveillance programme if feasible and with same level of efficacy (i.e. rapid detection of HPAI infections)
- Contact with important trade partners about vaccination plan, and adjust certificates where necessary
- Lobby for acceptance of vaccination and acceptation of products from vaccinated bird by third countries, and by retail in the EU
- Many steps to be taken before large scale vaccination programme can be launched
- Exploring possibilities working together