



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Community Research

EU-FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECT

Development of new integrated strategies for prevention, control and monitoring of epizootic poultry diseases (Healthy Poultry)

Time of action: HEALTHY POULTRY started in November 2004 and is scheduled to end in October 2007

EU budget (funding): €1.12 million

Abstract

When highly pathogenic strains of influenza break out in poultry the consequences can be devastating – around 30 million chickens had to be killed during the avian influenza outbreak in the Netherlands in 2003. Destruction of infected birds is the primary means of control today but, as the Dutch crisis proves, even such drastic measures cannot totally avoid disaster.

Given the global spread of the H5N1 avian influenza subtype, policy-makers across Europe are looking to revise their strategies to better prepare for future outbreaks of epizootic diseases in poultry. They want to know how best to avoid infection and, when infections do occur, how best to limit their spread and impact.

HEALTHY POULTRY brings together seven academic institutions from the Netherlands, Italy, Germany and Hungary to assess current scientific understanding of epizootic poultry diseases, especially avian influenza. Researchers will then use this scientific basis to suggest new strategies for their prevention, control and monitoring. They will analyse different approaches and then provide guidelines for the implementation of these strategies in EU Member States for specific situations, e.g. at the regional level.

The partners will complement their recommendations with various PC-models for the evaluation of various control strategies in different situations, e.g. regions and poultry species. Moreover, a 'risk assessment toolkit' will be provided. This is a GIS-based system which will allow policy-makers to evaluate regions within the EU with respect to their risks for introduction and spreading of avian influenza.

The project will be carried out in close co-operation with a platform of experts and decision-makers (the 'users' of the project results) and representatives of major stakeholders in the poultry business who would be most affected by the implementation of new policies.

The results of this project will be presented and discussed at a scientific conference at the end of the project, aimed at all stakeholders throughout the EU involved in the avian influenza problem.

Status (January 2006)

The project entered its second year. No final results can be presented yet. Some of these will be expected within one year from now.

Project coordinator

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List of partners (listed countrywise). Coordinator will only give out names and other contacts upon request

DE – Institute for Spatial Analysis and Planning of Intensive Agriculture (ISPA), University of Vechta

IT – Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie. Legnaro

NL – Department of Farm Animal Health, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Utrecht University

NL – LEI-Animal, Agricultural Economics Research Institute, Wageningen

HU – Faculty of Veterinary Science, Szent István University, Budapest

IT – Istituto Nazionale per la Fauna Selvatica, Ozzano

Website

<http://www.healthy-poultry.org> (under construction)