

HPAI Response

Timeline, Eligibility, and Approval for Restocking

March 21, 2025

Please note: These procedures may be revised as the situation develops.

DOCUMENT HISTORY & RELATED DOCUMENTS

This document updates and supersedes the following documents:

- ◆ *Timeline to Restocking & Environmental Sampling Procedures*
- ◆ *Restocking Criteria for Previously Infected Premises*

Please also see the following, related policy documents (www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-emergencies/fadprep):

- ◆ *Protocol for Environmental Sample Collection and Testing for AI Virus*
- ◆ *Cleaning & Disinfection Basics (Virus Elimination)*

INTENDED USE

This document provides guidance to State Animal Health Officials (SAHOs), USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Officials, and Incident Management Teams (IMTs) for the restocking of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI)-infected WOAHP poultry premises. This includes the timeline for restocking and criteria that must be met for premises to restock.

For premises to restock after HPAI infection, they must meet the minimum time requirements, all criteria laid out in this document **AND** be approved to restock. Being approved to restock indicates that in addition to finishing all the steps in the restocking process, the premises has met any additional criteria that may have been laid out by the State or APHIS, and that State and APHIS officials agreed in writing that the premises can be restocked.

BIOSECURITY MEASURES

All biosecurity practices currently in place on the premises (including use of personal protective equipment [PPE]) will be followed for activities discussed in this document, including sample collection for environmental testing and final inspection of the premises prior to quarantine release. The level of PPE needed for different activities (environmental sampling, for example) will be determined by the SAHOs and/or IMTs.

TIMELINE TO RESTOCKING OF PREVIOUSLY INFECTED PREMISES

The timelines provided below offer guidance on just the *steps, time, and sampling* it takes to reach the point to be eligible to begin the restocking process and, ultimately, approved to restock.

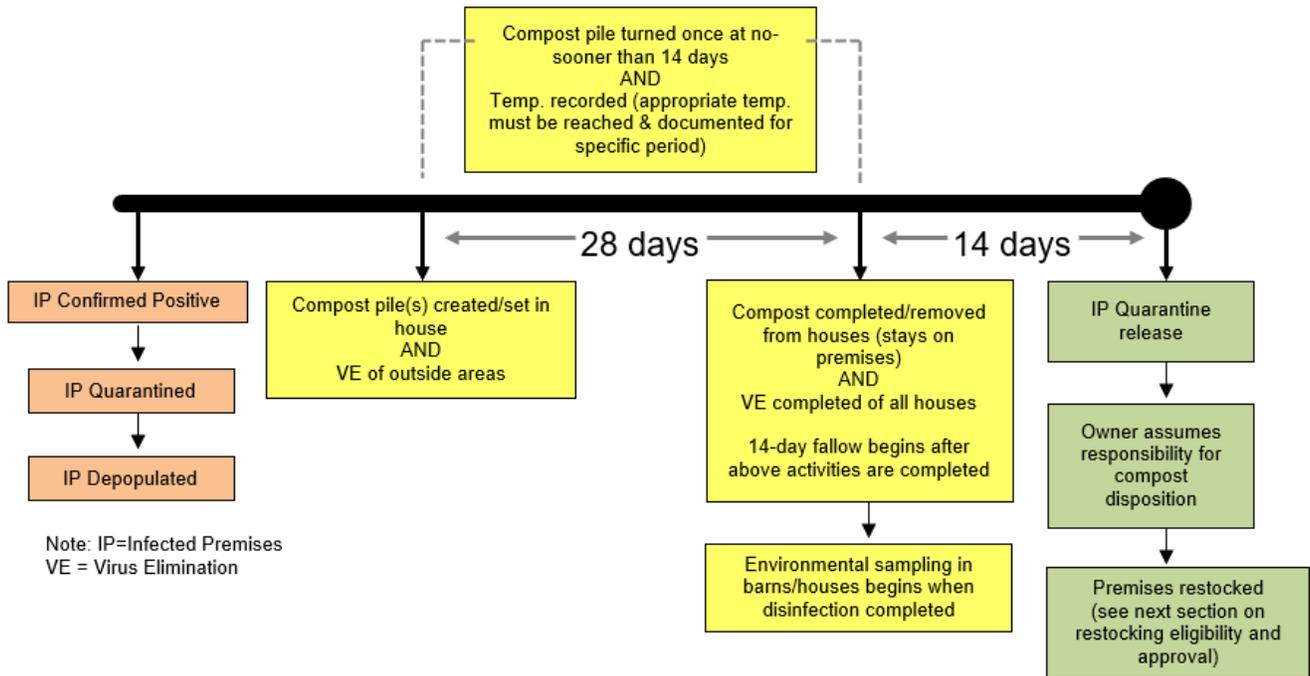
TIMELINES FOR RESTOCKING FOR PREMISES USING COMPOSTING

Please see Figures 1 through 3 for the timelines on premises using composting. Figure 1 covers in-house composting, Figure 2 covers outdoor composting, and Figure 3 covers the combination of in-house/outdoor composting. For premises using composting, environmental sampling inside the houses/barns occurs after the compost pile is complete and removed from inside the houses/barns and subsequent virus elimination activities have been completed for all houses/barns. For outdoor

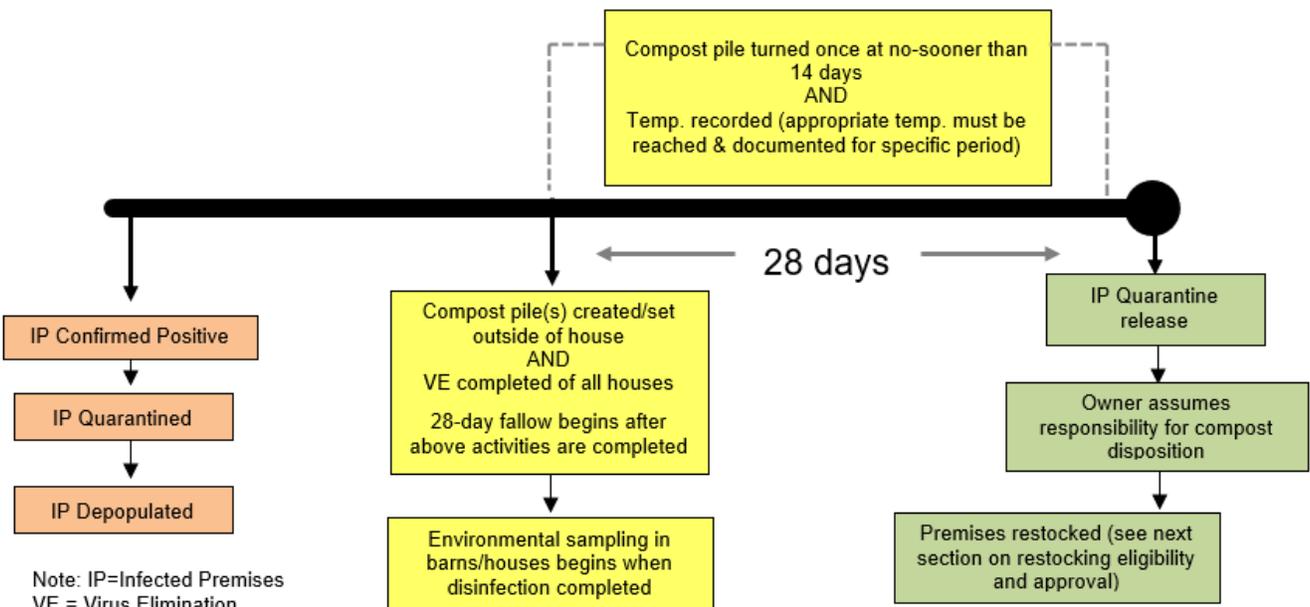
composting, environmental sampling inside the houses/barns can occur after the houses/barns have completed virus elimination.

Please note: There is no requirement OR option to release compost based upon compost sample testing.

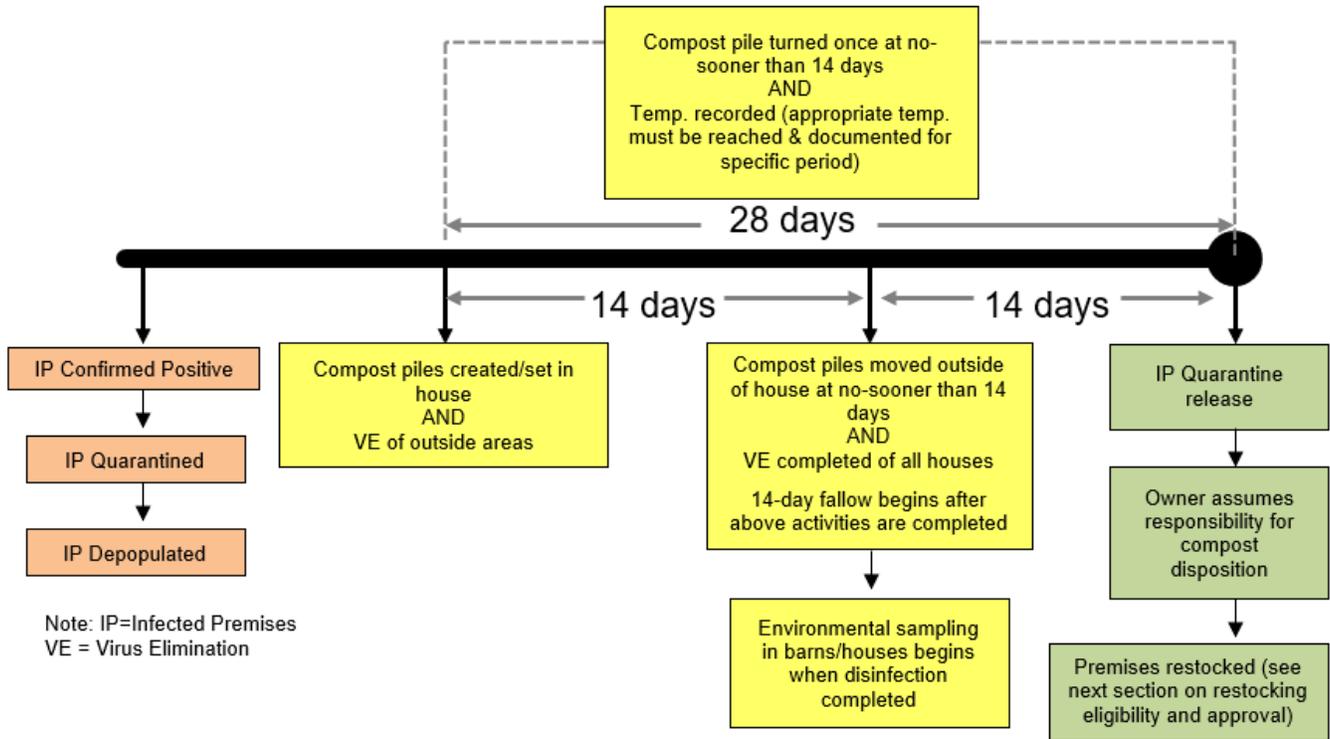
*Figure 1. Timeline for Disposal & Premises Restocking:
 IN-HOUSE COMPOSTING*



*Figure 2. Timeline for Disposal & Premises Restocking:
 OUTDOOR COMPOSTING*



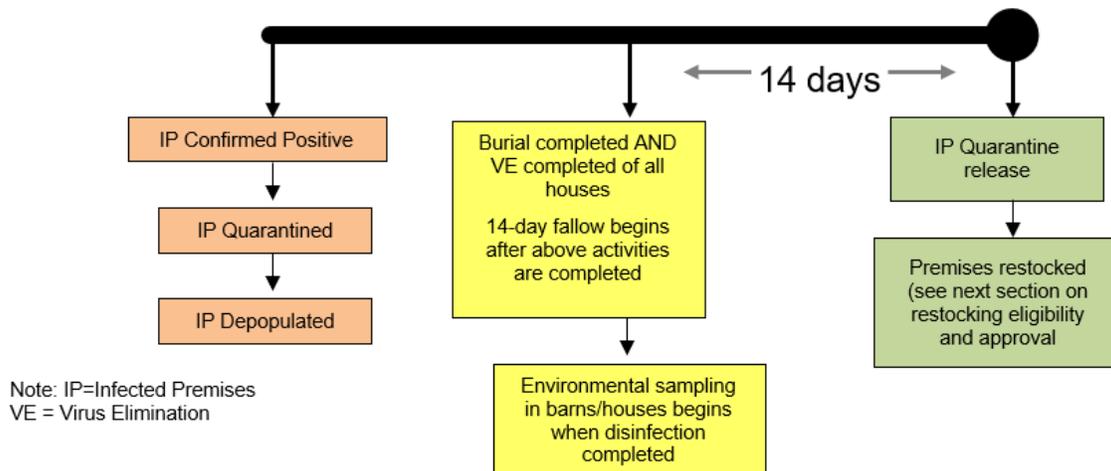
*Figure 3. Timeline for Disposal & Premises Restocking
 COMBO OF IN-HOUSE/OUTDOOR COMPOSTING*



TIMELINE TO RESTOCKING OF PREMISES USING BURIAL

For premises using burial, the barns are cleaned and disinfected after disposal. Environmental sampling occurs after cleaning and disinfection is completed. Figure 4 provides the restocking timeline for premises using burial.

Figure 4. Timeline for Disposal & Premises Restocking: BURIAL



RESTOCKING PREVIOUSLY INFECTED PREMISES

The primary goal of the HPAI response is to ensure that the response efforts and activities do not cause more damage and disruption than the disease outbreak itself. However, restocked premises that subsequently become infected with HPAI again place added stress on already strained resources and continue the risk of ongoing HPAI transmission in commercial poultry. As such, APHIS urges appropriate caution restocking premises in an HPAI outbreak.

RESTOCKING ASSESSMENTS

Two assessments must occur for previously infected premises to be eligible for restock:

1. An assessment of the previously Infected Premises being restocked. This includes the environmental sampling results and assessment of whether the premises has met the timeline requirements in Figures 1-4 (as applicable to the specific premises).
2. An assessment of the surrounding area or Control Area in which the Infected Premises is located. Assessment information includes the epidemiological curve (rate of new infected premises), geospatial risk factors, and other epidemiological risk factors for the previously infected premises.

INDEMNITY

APHIS will not indemnify previously Infected Premises that are restocked without written APHIS and State approval and subsequently become an Infected Premises again. For premises that meet the criteria specified in the sections below, including written approval by APHIS and State officials that restocking can occur, full indemnification will be provided by APHIS as funds are available.

RESTOCKING PROCESS

When a premises finishes virus elimination and a final inspection of the premises has been completed, the premises enters the restocking phase of the response. At this point, the premises can begin the restocking process but is not yet approved to restock. In other words, the premises is eligible to begin the restocking process while pending restock approval.

To seek approval from APHIS and State officials to restock a previously Infected Premises, all of the following criteria must be met:

1. The owner and/or grower meets, for the original Infected Premises, the requirements of the
 - a. State Quarantine Notice or Hold Order(s); AND
 - b. USDA Flock Plan.
2. An assessment that the premises meets the minimum conditions laid out in this document with regard to timeline to restocking, including the
 - a. Minimum 14- or 28-day fallow period post cleaning and disinfection, for the method of disposal chosen; AND
 - b. All environmental samples are reported not detected by either PCR or Virus Isolation, with no evidence of HPAI infection.
3. In consultation with State animal health officials, the owner evaluates risk factors at the start of the 14- or 28-day fallow period which begins after completion of virus elimination activities.

For any additional criteria specific to NPIP commercial premises, please refer to the [flock plan](#) on the HPAI FAD PReP site. In accordance with 9 CFR § 53.10 and 9 CFR § 53.11, NPIP commercial poultry premises must have a successful HPAI Biosecurity Compliance Audit Program biosecurity audit (i.e.,

with a “pass” result) prior to placing poultry on the previously infected premises as a condition of eligibility to receive federal indemnity should the poultry placed on the premises become infected with HPAI.

When these three steps are completed, the premises can then seek approval to restock from APHIS and State officials. A premises may only seek approval to restock after the premises completes a 14- or 28-day fallow period, as specified in the figures, after final virus elimination, environmental sampling is complete and shows no evidence of HPAI, and the premises meets requirements of the State Quarantine Notice/Hold Order and the USDA Flock Plan.

APPROVAL FOR RESTOCKING

After all the above criteria are met in the “Restocking Process” section, premises become ready for State and APHIS officials to approve the restocking. Additional criteria, particularly further biosecurity measures, may be required by State and/or APHIS officials in order for the premises to be restocked; State requirements may vary by State:

The owner and/or grower will complete any additional surveillance, biosecurity procedures, and requirements for movement as may be required by the State and APHIS upon and following restocking. These biosecurity requirements may include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- a. Virus elimination procedures for all movement onto the farm and all movement into and between barns.
- b. Personnel-specific biosecurity measures, including personal protective equipment and clothing not to be worn outside the area specified.
- c. Exclusion of any wild animals from the barn structure.
- d. Measures to ensure feed and water are not subject to contamination by fomites or vectors, such as wild birds or their feces.
- e. Immediate mitigation of standing water, feed spills, and other environmental factors that may attract wild birds.
- f. Elimination of visits by non-essential personnel.

After State/APHIS criteria have been met and State and APHIS officials have assessed the Control Area, they will approve, in writing, that the premises can be restocked. The premises is now “approved to restock.” This means that the premises has met all the requirements set by State and APHIS officials to be approved to restock and has a signed restock agreement. In some cases, the formal Restock Approval Letter may be issued a few days prior to the end of the fallow period; however, the premises cannot restock until the date on the Letter. Any USDA Flock Plan requirements pertaining to restocking remain in place.

PREMISES THAT ARE ELIGIBLE BUT **NOT** APPROVED FOR RESTOCKING

At times, a premises may have completed the 14- or 28-day fallow period and have negative environmental testing but not be approved to restock because of ongoing disease cases in the Control Area. These premises are “eligible to begin the restocking process/pending restock approval” until State and APHIS officials assess the Control Area and determine that a Restock Approval Letter can be issued to the premises. At this point the premises is “approved to restock.”

PREMISES THAT **Do Not** PLAN TO RESTOCK

In some cases, producers may choose to delay restocking, although they may complete the rest of the steps outlined above. These premises will remain in “Pending Restock Approval” status until State and/or APHIS officials approve, in writing, that the premises can be restocked. The steps in the

“Restocking Process” section must be documented in EMRS in the same manner regardless of the premises’ intention to obtain a Restock Approval Letter from State/APHIS officials.

TESTING FOR RESTOCKED BIRDS

Birds used for restocking must be from flocks tested for HPAI and/or from an NPIP commercial flock. If birds used for restocking are being sourced from a premises located in an active Control Area, then testing and permitting requirements must be met before movement. State or Federal animal health officials may require producers to test birds used for restocking from premises located outside an active Control Area.

Alternatives to this protocol may be made by State and APHIS officials, to include testing after movement of birds.