

HPAI Response

Timeline, Eligibility, and Approval for Restocking

February 28, 2022

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/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 commercial 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.

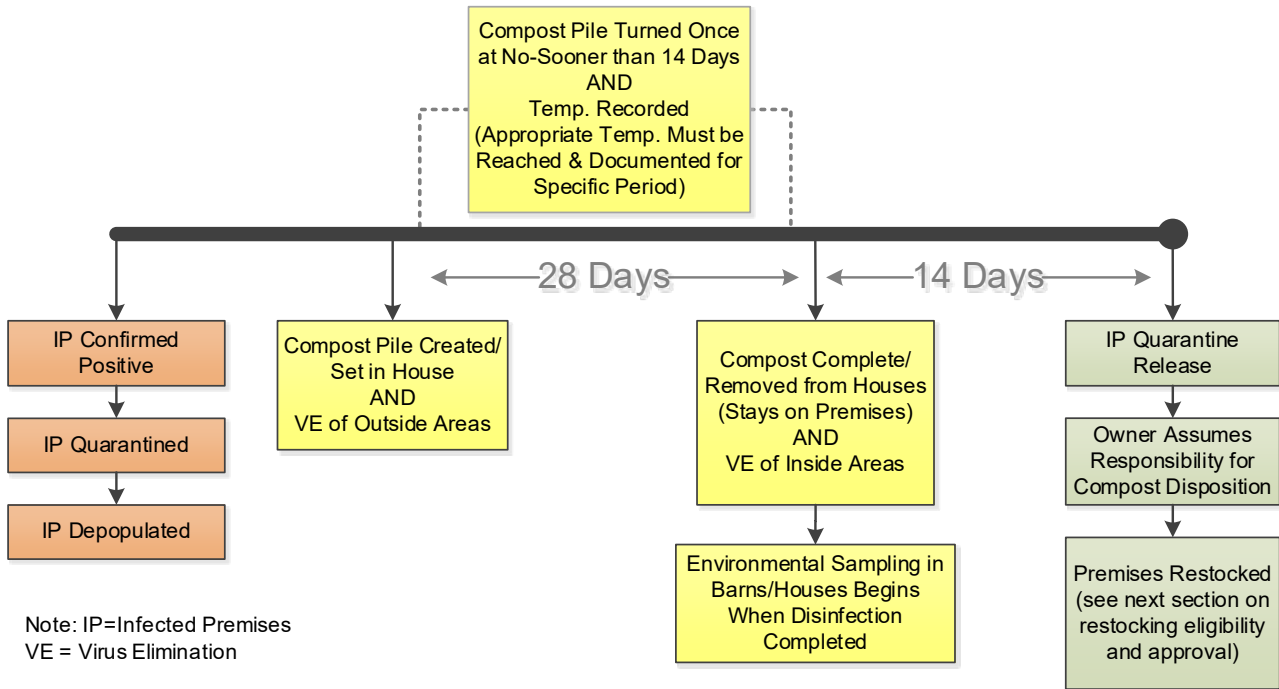
Timelines for Restocking for Premises Using Composting

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 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*

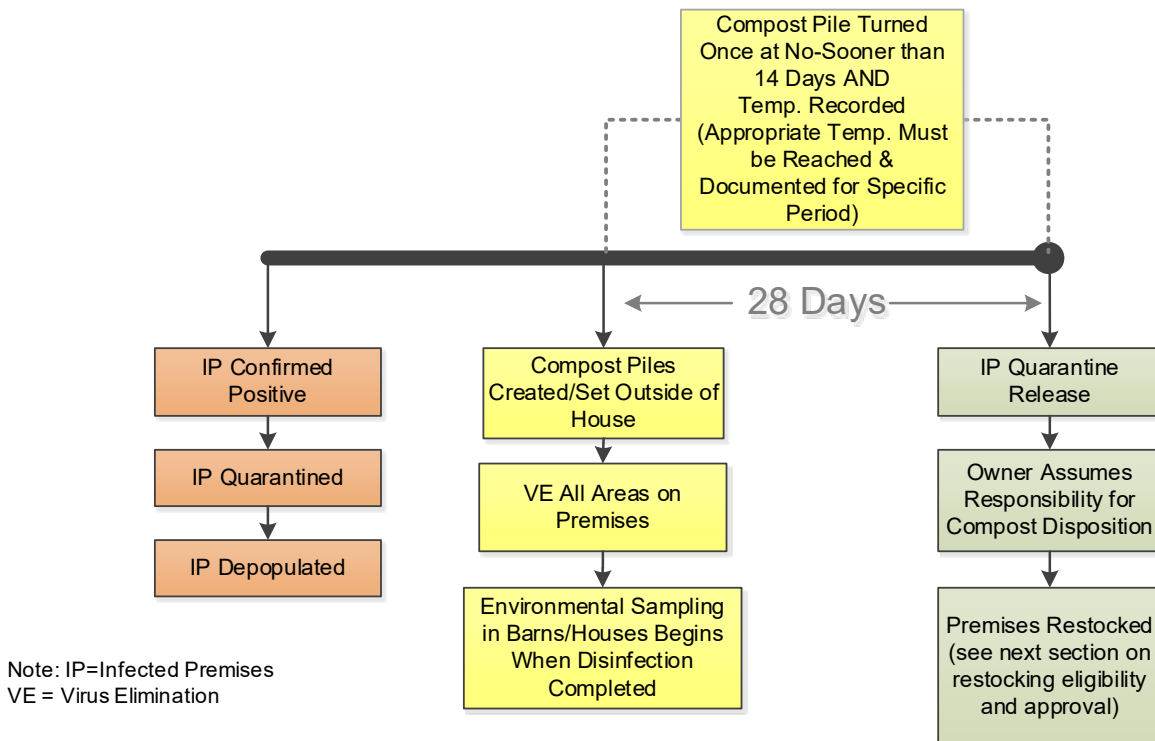
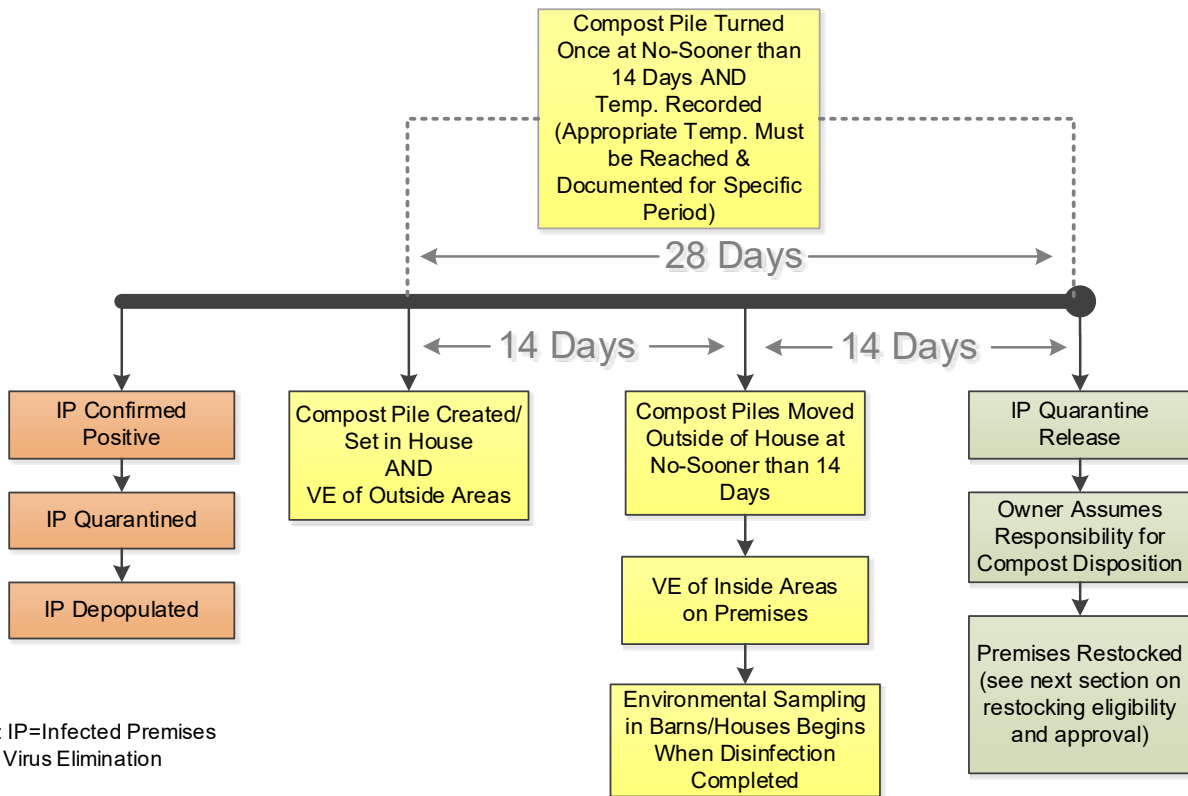


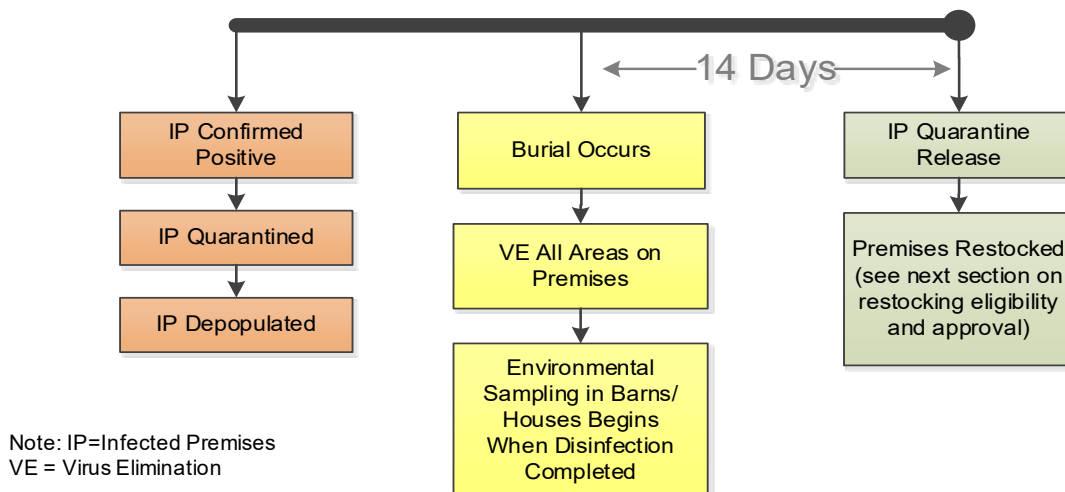
Figure 3. Timeline for Disposal & Premises Restocking:
COMBO OF IN-HOUSE/OUTDOOR COMPOSTING



Timeline for Restocking for Premises Using Burial

For premises using burial, environmental sampling is performed inside the houses/barns *after* the premises is cleaned and disinfected following disposal. Figure 4 provides the restocking timeline for premises using burial.

Figure 4. Timeline for Disposal & Premises Restocking: BURLIAL



RESTOCKING PREVIOUSLY INFECTED PREMISES

A 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 a second time 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 to restock previously infected premises:

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 a second time. 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 (in other words, the premises is “eligible to begin the restocking process/pending restock approval”), but is **not yet** approved to restock.

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 fallow time, for the method of disposal chosen; AND
 - b. Environmental sampling, 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-day fallow period (that begins upon completion of virus elimination activities).

When these three steps are completed, the premises can then seek approval to restock from APHIS and State officials. To restate: a premises may only seek approval to restock when the premises is 14-days post completion of 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:

1. 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 barn specific clothing not to be worn outside.
 - c. Exclusion of wild birds and rodents from the barn structure.
 - d. Measures to ensure feed and water are not contaminated by 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-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

There may be the case in which a premises does not plan to restock immediately or in the near future and therefore does not seek a Restock Approval Letter (but may complete the rest of the steps outlined above). These premises will continue to be “Pending Restock Approval” 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. These flocks must be tested for HPAI prior to movement; the minimum standard is two (2) negative rRT-PCR tests at least 24 hours apart, with one negative test within 24 hours of movement.