Import Alert: Release of HPAI Restrictions on Akita, Aomori, and Miyagi Prefectures in Japan

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Effective date: August 2, 2022

Effective August 2, 2022, and until further notice, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services (VS) is removing restrictions on the importation of poultry, commercial birds, ratites, avian hatching eggs, unprocessed avian products and byproducts, and certain fresh poultry products from Akita, Aomori, and Miyagi Prefectures in Japan.

VS placed avian commodity restrictions on these prefectures due to the diagnosis of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in domestic birds, effective November 10, 2021 (Akita), December 12, 2021 (Aomori), and March 25, 2022 (Miyagi).

Each prefecture has now effectively demonstrated complete resolution of the HPAI outbreaks and met the requirements to regain its previous HPAI-free status in accordance with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Terrestrial Animal Health Code, Chapter 10.4, Article 10.4.3. Therefore, this alert rescinds the previous alert and removes the HPAI restrictions for avian commodities originating from or transiting these three prefectures.

As previously announced, VS continues to restrict the importation of poultry, commercial birds, ratites, avian hatching eggs, unprocessed avian products and byproducts, and certain fresh poultry products from Iwate Prefecture (effective February 12, 2022) and Hokkaido Prefecture (effective April 16, 2022). Any of these commodities originating from or transiting a restricted prefecture are prohibited, based on the diagnosis of HPAI in domestic birds.

Under these restrictions, processed avian products and byproducts originating from or transiting a restricted prefecture, imported as cargo, must be accompanied by an APHIS import permit and/or government certification confirming that the products were treated according to APHIS requirements.

Fresh, unprocessed shell/table eggs and other egg products, void of the shell (i.e., liquid eggs, dried egg whites) originating from or transiting a restricted zone, imported as cargo, are prohibited unless they are consigned from the port of arrival directly to an APHIS-approved breaking and pasteurization facility. An import permit and/or certificate is/are not required for these shipments when consigned to an APHIS-approved establishment.

Processed avian products and byproducts, including egg/egg products, for personal use originating from or transiting a restricted zone and entering in passenger baggage must:

- have a thoroughly cooked appearance;
- be shelf-stable as a result of APHIS-approved packaging and cooking (i.e., packaged in hermetically sealed containers and cooked by a commercial method after such packing to produce articles that are shelf-stable without refrigeration); or
• be accompanied by an APHIS import permit and/or government certification confirming that the products/byproducts were treated according to APHIS requirements.

Unprocessed avian products and byproducts originating from or transiting a restricted prefecture will not be permitted to enter the United States. This includes hunter-harvested meat. Non-fully finished avian hunting trophies must be consigned to an APHIS-approved taxidermy establishment.

Importation of poultry, commercial birds, ratites, and hatching eggs originating from or transiting a restricted prefecture will be prohibited. However, pet and zoo birds, pigeons, and doves, may be imported under an APHIS import permit, and will be subject to a 30-day quarantine at the New York Animal Import Center in Newburgh, NY or the Miami Animal Import Center in Miami, FL.

These restrictions will be updated as additional epidemiological information is obtained. Current information can be found on the APHIS website.