



Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Service

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Veterinary Services
Strategy and Policy
Live Animal Imports

4700 River Road

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USDA recognition of Live Bird Markets agreement as it relates to weekly testing for Influenza A Virus by Drost Farms Ltd. (Canada) and recipient of poultry shipments, Watkins Poultry Merchants of New York (U.S.)

In response to the detection of influenza A virus (including Low Pathogenicity Avian Influenza H5N2 and influenza A virus subtype H2N2) in live bird markets in the northeast United States, APHIS recognizes the informal agreement between Drost Farms Ltd.(Canada) and Watkins Poultry Merchants of New York(United States). Drost Farms Ltd. has agreed to weekly testing of influenza A virus in live poultry which they export from Canada to the United States to further ensure no evidence of communicable disease is present in these flocks.

U.S. import requirements state that each flock and hatchery must be inspected by a veterinarian within 30 days of import, there is no evidence of Newcastle disease or any communicable disease of poultry found, and the poultry in the flock have not been exposed to any such disease during the 90 days immediately prior to the inspection date. Weekly testing was an industry voluntary response to the detection of LPAI, H5N2, at one of the farms in 2016. More recently, there has been an emergence of an influenza A virus H2N2 live bird marketing system strain in the northeast U.S. live bird markets since 2017. Increasing testing frequency for influenza A virus improves safety and security of the live bird markets, as well as all susceptible poultry in the United States and Canada.

Flock testing protocols specific to influenza A virus detection have been approved by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). Negative test results of the weekly samples should accompany each import shipment and made available for USDA APHIS staff at U.S. ports of entry and New York State Veterinarian, at the NY Agriculture and Markets Agency.

For any additional questions, contact Dr. Bettina Helm at (301) 851-3362 or Bettina.Helm@usda.gov.

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