



USDA Support for Dairy Herd Producers



In March 2024, USDA confirmed highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in dairy cattle. Since then, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as State veterinary and public health officials, have been investigating and responding to virus detections in cattle across multiple States.

On May 10, USDA announced financial assistance options for producers with affected herds. On May 23, USDA announced expanded support to include producers whose herds have not tested positive for HPAI. USDA is offering this financial support to help producers enhance their biosecurity practices, offset costs associated with testing and shipping samples, as well as to help producers eliminate the virus and protect their employees.

Options Available to All Producers

All dairy producers are eligible for the following financial assistance options:

Biosecurity planning and implementation. USDA will provide support to develop biosecurity plans. This includes recommended enhanced biosecurity for individuals that frequently move between dairy premises (such as milk haulers, veterinarians, feed trucks, and artificial insemination technicians) as well as on-farm disease management practices, mitigations for wildlife and birds, and other key biosecurity practices. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) also provides farm loans for biosecurity measures. Learn more at www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/farm-loans-for-biosecurity.pdf.

- Producers can elect to hire private entities to develop site-specific plans, conduct biosecurity trainings, and perform audits.
 - Producers would be compensated up to \$1,500 per affected premises for these services after verification and inclusion on the detailed financial plan.
- Producers could elect to work with State personnel who would develop site-specific plans, conduct biosecurity trainings, and perform audits.
 - States would be compensated under a cooperative agreement based on the flat rates for activities chosen by the producer.
- USDA will provide a \$100 payment to producers who purchase and install an in-line sampler for their milk system.

Offset shipping costs for influenza A testing at laboratories in the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN).

USDA will pay for the cost for of shipping samples to NAHLN labs for testing.

- USDA will pay actual shipping costs, not to exceed \$50 per shipment for up to two shipments per month for each affected premises.
- Testing at NAHLN laboratories for samples associated with this event (e.g. pre-movement, testing of sick/suspect animals, or samples from concerned producers) is already being conducted at no-cost to the producer.

Options Available Only to Affected Producers

In addition to being eligible for the programs listed above, dairy producers with premises that have been confirmed positive for HPAI are eligible for the following additional assistance programs:

Heat treatment to dispose of milk in a bio secure fashion. This will provide producers a safe option to dispose of their milk. Heat treatment performed in accordance with standards set by FDA is the only currently available method considered to effectively inactivate the virus in milk.

- If a producer establishes a system to heat treat all waste milk before disposal, USDA will pay the producer up to \$2,000 per month, up to \$8,000 total, per affected premises.

Reimbursement for veterinarian costs associated with confirmed positive HPAI premises. USDA will provide support to producers to cover veterinary costs necessarily incurred for treating cattle infected with HPAI, as well as fees for veterinarians to collect samples for testing.

- This can include veterinary fees and/or specific supplies needed for treatment and sample collection.
- Veterinary costs are eligible for reimbursement from the initial date of positive confirmation at NVSL for that premises, up to \$10,000 per premises.

Protect against the potential for disease spread between humans and animals. USDA will provide financial support for producers with affected herds who supply personal protective equipment (PPE) to employees and/or provide outerwear uniform laundering and facilitate the participation of their workers in a USDA/CDC workplace and farmworker study.

- A flat rate per employee will be offered to producers who elect this option, up to \$2,000 per affected premises per month.
- Producers will need to provide proof of purchase of PPE or the cost of laundering services as well as acknowledgement from CDC of their participation in the study.

Milk loss offset. FSA is accepting applications through its updated Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-raised Fish Program to provide financial assistance to dairy producers who incur milk losses due to HPAI infection in their dairy herds. For details, go to www.fsa.usda.gov/ELAP.

Enrollment and Verification

Interested producers should contact the Area Veterinarian in Charge (www.aphis.usda.gov/contact/animal-health) or State Animal Health Official to enroll.

Participating producers will sign an agreement detailing the options they wish to use and requirements for payments.

Producers will work with USDA personnel to develop a plan for their premises. After developing a plan, the producer will track expenses and maintain receipts for reimbursement. In order to assure fiscal accountability with federal funds, USDA personnel may conduct a review every 30 days to monitor the implementation of selected activities.

The producer will receive information to sign up for a System for Award Management (SAM) registration, which provides a mechanism of payment, or be offered an alternative method of payment (such as an electronic funds transfer form for direct deposit payments or request for a paper check to be drafted), although these other options will result in less timely payments compared to SAM.

Payments

Participating producers will have the option to submit receipts and tracked expenses every 30 days for 4 months or once after 120 days. They will receive a VS form 8-18 to review and sign verifying the costs of planned activities.