

Govt considers vaccination to contain the spread of avian influenza

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development is looking at the possibility of a vaccination to contain the spread and impact of avian influenza. Minister, Thoko Didiza, met with the retailers on Monday to discuss the impact of avian influenza, also known as 'avian flu' or 'bird flu', in South Africa. This follows a meeting held with the South African Poultry Association last Friday and engagements that have been taking place between government officials and the industry.



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During the meeting, Didiza briefed retailers on the containment measures that have been taken to limit the spread of the disease, as well as possible solutions to manage such outbreaks in the short and the medium term, including vaccinations.

"It was evident from [Monday's] engagement that the main challenge is primarily on the egg production side, where there are supply constraints in some regions of the country. In response to this challenge, the Minister is focusing on measures to improve the availability of egg supply to consumers and simultaneously putting measures to contain the spread of the disease.



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29 Sep 2023



"Moreover, the Minister is embarking on the efficiency improvement in issuing import permits for egg products to ensure sufficient supplies for consumers. In addition, the Minister is looking at the possibility of vaccination and currently reviewing applications by various suppliers," the department said in a statement.

On the broiler side, Didiza and Trade, Industry and Competition Minister, Ebrahim Patel, are assessing some trade instruments to ease the supply of chicken meat.

According to the statement issued by the department last week, as of 21 September 2023, a total of 50 highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H7 outbreaks and 10 HPAI H5 outbreaks have been reported in the country, with 37 HPAI H7 cases confirmed in Gauteng.



RCL Foods culls 410,000 chickens amid bird flu outbreak

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The number of chickens that have died is 107,705, while the reported number of chickens that were culled is 1,318,521.

“Based on these reported figures, there has been a total loss of 1,426,226 chickens,” the department said.

The reported number of chickens that have died of HPAI H5 is 98,249, while the reported number of chickens that were culled is 1 156 283, bringing the total loss of 1,254,532 chickens.

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