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Wes Ward
Secretary of Agriculture

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TO: Arkansas dairy producers and veterinarians

FROM: John G. Nilz, DVM / Arkansas State Veterinarian

SUBJECT: Premovement Testing Requirements for Interstate Movement of Lactating Dairy Cattle

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has issued a federal order that will become effective Monday, April 29, 2024. This order is implemented to prevent the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). As of April 24, 2024, USDA has confirmed HPAI H5N1 clade 2.3.4.4b virus detections on 33 dairy cattle premises in eight states (Kansas, Idaho, Michigan, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, South Dakota, Texas).

The federal order can be accessed at this link: aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/dairy-federal-order.pdf. Federal guidance related to the order can be accessed at this link: [APHIS Requirements and Recommendations for State Animal Health Officials, Accredited Veterinarians and Producers.](#)

This order mandates testing and reporting. Lactating dairy cattle are required to receive a negative test for Influenza A virus at an approved National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) laboratory prior to interstate movement.

Sample collection and submission must be conducted by an accredited veterinarian for PCR testing. A minimum of five milliliters will be needed for the screening test and any necessary sequential testing. Samples must be collected according to the process outlined in the APHIS guidance document above. Samples are to be submitted to our Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Little Rock.

USDA will reimburse the costs of testing at NAHLN labs including samples submitted for (1) dairy cattle suspected of disease due to clinical signs, (2) pre-movement testing, (3) producers interested in the disease status of their asymptomatic animals, and (4) samples taken from other animals on dairies associated with this disease event.

Laboratories and state veterinarians must report any positive results to USDA. Owners of herds that test positive will be required to provide epidemiological information, including animal movement tracing.

State officials urge all producers, especially dairy and poultry farmers, to implement strict biosecurity measures on their farms to prevent the spread of the disease. Find biosecurity resources from USDA at aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/defend-the-flock/resources.

Producers with animal health concerns should contact the Arkansas Department of Agriculture at info@agriculture.arkansas.gov or call 501-225-1598. To learn more about HPAI and for updates on the situation in other states, visit aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-detections/livestock.

Your time and efforts to help protect our livestock and poultry industries are greatly appreciated.