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ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Wes Ward
Secretary of Agriculture

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TO: Arkansas dairy producers and veterinarians

FROM: Dr. John G. Nilz, State Veterinarian

SUBJECT: Restriction of Interstate Movement of Dairy Cattle

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has confirmed highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in dairy herds in Texas, Kansas, Michigan, Idaho, and New Mexico. Symptoms of the virus in dairy cattle include decreased lactation, low appetite, and thickening of milk. To date, there have been no reported cases of HPAI in livestock within Arkansas.

Additionally, on April 1, 2024, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed that a dairy farm worker tested positive for HPAI in Texas. Read the full press release from CDC at cdc.gov/media/releases/2024/p0401-avian-flu.html.

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture and Arkansas Department of Health are monitoring the situation and taking preventative measures to protect public and animal health within the state. Pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated 2-33-107, the following import restrictions are in effect immediately:

1. No dairy cattle exhibiting clinical signs and testing positive for HPAI will be allowed to move into Arkansas.
2. All dairy cattle entering Arkansas from states affected by HPAI in dairy cattle will require permitting by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture and may be required to complete pre-movement testing as determined by the State Veterinarian. Permits can be obtained at ar.accessgov.com/livestock-poultry/Forms/Page/livestock-poultry/entrypermit/.
3. Failure to abide by these import requirements shall result in a whole premises quarantine on imported animals for 21 days and negative PCR testing for HPAI before release from quarantine.

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. 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 poultry and livestock industries is greatly appreciated.