

# REPORT DISEASE AND HEALTH HAZARD NEWS OF INTEREST ALONG THE BORDER

February 23 - March 1, 2023

## WEEKLY EVENTS

- On February 23, 2023, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) along with the Royal Thai Police's Consumer Protection Division inspected seven food stores in Bangkok that sell imported food from China. They found drinks, meat products, ready-to-eat food in sealed containers, and ready-to-eat food with incorrect labeling and without Thai language on the packaging. The food products did not have a 13-digit Thai Food and Drug Administration identification number. Officials seized all the products for further investigation and ordered health officials in all provinces to conduct inspections of food stores in their areas.
- On February 27, 2023, the Department of Disease Control warned the public, especially school-aged children, to beware of diarrhea as some periods of heavy rain and cool weather have caused various types of pathogens to proliferate, particularly norovirus and rotavirus, which can cause severe diarrhea, especially in young children and the elderly, as their immune systems are weaker than those of others. Symptoms usually include abdominal pain, vomiting, and watery diarrhea, but in severe cases, it can lead to shock and death. Therefore, the department urges the public to be aware of food and water safety by following the principles of "cook well, keep hot, and clean."

## BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR AVIAN INFLUENZA

On February 16, 2023, there was a news report that a patient died from H5N1 avian influenza in the province of Prey Veng, located in southeastern Cambodia, bordering Vietnam. The victim was an 11-year-old girl. Subsequently, it was found that her father was also infected, but did not show any symptoms. Currently, the disease situation is under investigation.

Thailand has not had any cases of avian influenza since 2006, a total of 16 years. Based on past experiences, the Ministry of Public Health, Thailand has established a good management system for avian influenza cases, and includes the hospital surveillance system that meets important risk standards. The smuggling of poultry across borders is a risk factor for disease outbreaks in the country. The surveillance of communicable disease at checkpoints between countries at land crossings has been upgraded alongside other agencies such as the customs and animal inspection checkpoints, plant inspection checkpoints, and communicable disease control checkpoints that oversee incoming travelers.

At this point, preliminary screening measures are being taken, such as measuring body temperature, observing symptoms, and assessing risk factors such as those who have close contact with birds. If a person is found to be at risk, officials will immediately collect a sample for testing and separate suspected individuals for continued monitoring. Travelers from countries with outbreaks of the disease and the general public at risk should monitor themselves for symptoms such as fever or respiratory symptoms such as a sore throat or runny nose and seek medical attention for immediate diagnosis. Additionally, consuming well-cooked food, wearing a face mask, and washing hands before meals can help prevent the spread of diseases.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

The livestock officers should coordinate with public health officers to disseminate information about avian influenza in Cambodia to the local community. If villagers who raise poultry notice any abnormal occurrences, such as unexplained deaths of birds, they should report to the village head, or district livestock office. The dead birds should not be consumed and should be properly buried. If anyone has flu-like symptoms or has a history of contact with poultry or living in close proximity to them, they should report to the health authorities and livestock officials. Officials should also provide informal training or discussion to provide knowledge and recommendations for proper handling of avian influenza.

## INFORMATION COLLECTED AND ANALYZED BY

Multisectoral Capacity Development Program for Public Health Emergency Detection and Response in Border Areas

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## Sources

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