

REPORT DISEASE AND HEALTH HAZARD NEWS OF INTEREST ALONG THE BORDER

September 14 - 20, 2023

WEEKLY EVENTS

- On September 16, 2023, the Ministry of Public Health assigned the Department of Disease Control to establish the guidelines for administering the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine for females aged 11 to 20 years old. The Provincial Public Health Offices were tasked with assessing the target groups' numbers, and the National Health Security Office was instructed to expedite the procurement of additional vaccines. The vaccination process will be divided into two groups. The first group includes students in grades 5 to 6, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, and the vaccination will be administered in a manner similar to the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. The second group consists of out-of-school youth and females aged 18 to 20 years who have completed high school (Grade 12). They will receive the HPV vaccine at healthcare facilities. The goal is to administer at least 1 million doses of the HPV vaccine within 100 days.
- On September 17, 2023, the InfoQuest News Agency presented news about the 3rd Mekong-Lancang Cooperation (MLC) Water Resources Cooperation Meeting held in Beijing, the People's Republic of China. This meeting involved the collaboration of all six member countries, including Cambodia, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand. During the meeting, the participants were informed of the results of a joint study conducted under the project "Joint Study on Hydrological Changes of the Mekong-Lancang River Basin and Adaptation Strategies." This study aimed to understand the causes of changes in the flow of the Mekong River compared to the past. It also provided guidance for implementing activities in Phase 2 of the project. The information gathered from this study will be used to alert and plan for shared water use by the public and various agencies within the Mekong River basin.

AVIAN INFLUENZA IN ASIA: ALERT BUT NOT ALARMED

Thailand's H5N1 avian influenza risk assessment on September 20, 2023 reported that in February 2023, there were two cases of H5N1 avian influenza infections and one fatality in the Kingdom of Cambodia. Elsewhere in the Asian region, as of September 17, 2023, there was laboratory-confirmed H5N1 avian influenza in sparrows in Taiwan, with reports of 13,800 birds falling ill and 65,524 culled as a result.

As for Thailand, there have not been any human cases of avian influenza since 2006. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Public Health has established a management system in case of an outbreak. This system includes surveillance at various hospitals with standard operating procedures. The surveillance efforts will be elevated in cooperation with other agencies, such as the Customs Department, animal inspection points, and disease control points that manage incoming travelers. At these points, initial screening will be conducted, including temperature measurement, observation of symptoms like sore throats and runny noses, and assessment of risk factors like close contact with birds. If travelers from countries with avian influenza outbreaks or those at general risk exhibit symptoms, they should seek immediate medical attention and provide detailed information, such as their recent travel history to outbreak countries or close contact with birds. This information is crucial for the physician's diagnosis.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

Local authorities have notified the Provincial Livestock Office and public health agencies to inform the local residents about the avian influenza situation in the Asian region. If residents notice anything unusual in the area, such as birds becoming sick or dying without a known cause, they should report it to community leaders, local authorities, or the district Department of Livestock Development (Livestock Officials). Importantly, people are prohibited from consuming birds that have died due to unknown causes. The carcasses of such birds should be buried. Personal hygiene practices, such as consuming fully cooked food, wearing face masks, and washing hands before eating, also contribute to preventing this disease.

Given the current outbreak of avian influenza, if residents in the area identify individuals with symptoms resembling avian influenza and who have a history of contact with birds, reside in environments close to birds, or live near areas where birds have been abnormally dying within the past 7-14 days, they should report this information to local public health authorities and the local livestock office. For healthcare personnel in medical facilities who identify patients with suspected avian influenza, they should obtain a detailed history of the patient's risk factors. If the patient exhibits symptoms that fit the definition, it should be reported through the designated surveillance channels as specified.

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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- Information courtesy of: "Risk Assessment of Avian Influenza H5N1 in Thailand (as of September 20, 2023)." Dr. Soawapak Hinjoy, Public Health Veterinarian, Department of Disease Control.
- Image Courtesy of: <https://www.thairath.co.th/scoop/theissue/2642090>