



# A LOOK BACK AT THE AVIAN INFLUENZA AND AN OUTLOOK FOR FUTURE OUTBREAKS

## OVERVIEW

Since 2015, the highly pathogenic avian influenza (AI) virus has swept through 16 states across the nation: Arkansas, California, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Washington and Wisconsin. Nearly 50 million birds died as a result of the outbreak including 213 commercial and 22 backyard flocks.

## MARKET IMPACT

Everyone is affected by outbreaks of this magnitude, and the impact casts a wide net over the entire supply chain. AI outbreaks result in significant challenges for the agricultural industry, including farms, state and federal animal health organizations, and food manufacturers.

- ▶ Mass number of flocks needed to be depopulated to prevent the spread of the disease.
- ▶ Lack of product to send to market resulted in the highest egg prices ever recorded, also increasing the input costs for foods incorporating eggs and egg products.
- ▶ High demand for eggs strained producers whose flocks were not infected.
- ▶ Retailers and manufacturers scrambled to meet customer needs.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ A quick response is the best response.
  - Depopulate within 24 hours of learning about infection to prevent the spread of disease.
- ▶ Communication is key to success.
  - Build partnerships and networks with state and local agriculture departments and trade associations now – before disaster strikes. Develop a plan for efficient, safe and secure depopulation.
- ▶ Catastrophes move faster than the speed of science or government.
  - Take ownership of doing the work of legally depopulating, sanitizing and preventing spread and infection rather than waiting for government or outside contractors.
- ▶ Biosecurity must be initiated at the flock level.
  - Each farm is different, and diverse programs and procedures are necessary.
- ▶ Consider protection in advance.
  - Review contracts for consistency and consider whether contracts allocate risk for the next AI outbreak.

### CONTACT



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## BIOSECURITY PREVENTION TIPS



- 1.** Secure third-party oversight to audit biosecurity procedures and programs.
- 2.** Register every vehicle that comes onto the farm, and don't allow unnecessary traffic onto the premises.
- 3.** Install washing systems for trucks and other vehicles entering farm areas.
- 4.** Eliminate or reduce "shared crews" that go from farm to farm.
- 5.** Eliminate areas that are attractions to migratory birds and waterfowl.
- 6.** Have personal attire and ingress/egress requirements for people entering and exiting barns and animal habitat areas.
- 7.** Have a biosecurity officer on each farm to provide training and promote this new way of life.

*FaegreBD extends thanks to the "A Breakout on Outbreaks: Lessons Learned and Preparation for the Next Avian Influenza or Other Agricultural Product Disease Outbreak" session panelists at our 2016 Food & Agriculture National Conference*