

Brussels, 24 June 2007

## **Avian influenza H5N1 confirmed in wild swans in Germany: authorities applying precautionary measures**

*The German authorities have informed the European Commission that laboratory tests carried out at the regional laboratory in Bavaria and the national reference laboratory for avian influenza in Insel Riems have detected the presence of the highly pathogenic avian influenza virus H5N1 in two swans found dead in the province of Nürnberg, in Bavaria.*

The German authorities are applying the precautionary measures set out in Commission Decision 2006/563/EC on certain protection measures in relation to highly pathogenic avian influenza in wild birds in the Community. The Decision sets out the measures to be applied in any EU Member State which has a case of suspected or confirmed highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 virus in wild birds.

The measures consist of the establishment of a control area and a surrounding monitoring area around the positive finding. This zoning is taking into the geographical, ecological and epidemiological factors of the concerned area. In the control area, on-farm biosecurity measures must be strengthened, hunting of wild birds is banned, disease awareness of poultry owners must be enhanced, movement of poultry is banned except directly to the slaughterhouse and the dispatch of meat outside the zone is forbidden except where products have undergone the controls provided for in EU food controls legislation. These measures are aimed at preventing the spread of avian influenza from wild birds to poultry or other captive birds, as well as the contamination of products. However, Community legislation foresees the possibility to adapt the above measures to the local situation and grant derogations based on a risk assessment.

Highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 was detected in more than 700 wild birds in the EU in 2006. However, the two infected swans in Bavaria are the first cases reported in wild birds in 2007.

This year, avian influenza H5N1 has been confirmed in poultry farms in 3 Member States: Hungary and United Kingdom (in a total of three farms, in late January/early February) and in the Czech Republic, in one farm, only two days ago. Only geese and turkeys have been affected