Worthwhile Operational Guidelines & Suggestions

HOW TO DEAL WITH THE AI OUTBREAK IN THE PROCESSING PLANT

The US poultry industry had to deal with containing the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in poultry this past summer with estimated economy-wide losses of $3.3 billion. Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) had to take many extraordinary measures to contain this devastating disease in affected states (https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R44114.pdf). Mr. Tom Smith, vice president of quality management at Jennie-O Turkey Store, provided five tips for poultry processors to follow, based on recent experience with the HPAI, in order to prepare in advance of an outbreak:

1. Create intervention plans ahead of time for your plants. There may be HPAI outbreaks at nearby farms that are not directly affecting your operation. However, because you will still be required to comply with biosecurity regulations if located within a control area, map out the nearby farms in relation to the processing facilities and draw circles around where a control area would be located should there be an outbreak.

2. Know how you are going to wash trucks and trailers. The trucks are considered “dirty” at receiving, therefore there should be a plan in place for cleaning and disinfecting all trucks.

3. Make sure to take into consideration that runoff cannot go into storm drains, so a containment system may be needed. There has to be a “containment plan” at the plant for eliminating runoff of any chemicals and water used in the disinfection process.

4. Develop your traffic routes to prevent cross-contamination. The traffic patterns for trucks entering and leaving the plant should be such that, if an outbreak of HPAI occurs, poultry can still be moved. This can be accomplished by designing a separate entrance for dirty trucks coming into the plant and a separate exit for clean trucks leaving the plant.

5. Develop your report of where product is shipped so you can submit for permits easily. In order to move product in and out of control zones, within and outside of the state in which the plant is located, official permits are needed. It is your responsibility to learn about the regulations to ensure that appropriate permits are on record.

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