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Page	Date	AVE (ZAR)
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QUARANTINE MEASURES

Bird flu spreads to two poultry flocks in US

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A strain of influenza deadly to chickens and other fowl has spread to poultry flocks in Kentucky and Virginia, less than a week after an outbreak in Indiana prompted some countries to limit shipments from the state.

Mexico is among countries that have banned or limited poultry imports from Indiana after the virus was detected there, and the wider spread raises the possibility of additional curbs.

The US agriculture department's animal and plant health inspection service said on Monday that tests showed the virus present in a flock of commercial broiler chickens in Fulton County, Kentucky, and a backyard flock of mixed species birds in Fauquier County, Virginia.

Birds in the two flocks have been quarantined and will be killed, the inspection service said. No human cases of the virus have been detected in the US, the agency said.

According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, these avian influenza detections do not present an immediate public health concern.

The Kentucky farm is one of the thousands that raise chickens for Tyson Foods, the company said in a statement.

While the situation is not expected to affect its overall chicken production levels, Tyson Foods is taking steps to prevent the spread of the virus, including boosting biosecurity measures at other farms in the region,

placing additional restrictions on visitors and continuing to test all flocks before birds leave the farms, it said.

The US said last week it is expanding surveillance of avian influenza to all four of its major bird flyways after the Indiana outbreak resulted in the death of thousands of turkeys.

A pathogenic strain was first discovered in January in the US in a wild American wigeon in South Carolina and then detected in wild birds in North Carolina before being found last week in a commercial turkey farm in Dubois County, Indiana, where 29,000 turkeys were culled.

TYSON FOODS IS TAKING STEPS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD, INCLUDING BOOSTING BIOSECURITY MEASURES

A serious US outbreak of bird flu in 2014-2015 led to the death of more than 50-million chickens and turkeys and cost the US economy about \$3.3bn in losses, according to a US agriculture department assessment.

Eighteen countries, including China, Russia and South Korea, banned the trade of poultry and poultry products from the US. Consumers paid higher prices for eggs, with wholesale egg prices at one point doubling from the previous three-year average. /Bloomberg