

DISCLAIMER

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The WOAH Secretariat performs an administrative and technical screening of a Member's self-declaration concerning the animal health status of a "country, a zone or a compartment", the terminology used in Chapter 1.6. ("self-declaration"). As described in the standard operating procedures for self-declarations, WOAH reserves the right not to publish a self-declaration on its website. There is no right of appeal from this decision nor any recourse of any kind.

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Self-declaration of country freedom from infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza viruses (HPAI) by Portugal

Declaration sent to WOAH on 07 April 2026 by Dr Susana Guedes Pombo, WOAH Delegate for Portugal, from the General Directorate for Food and Veterinary, Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

1. Introduction

The objective of this self-declaration is to officially declare Portugal (including the mainland and the autonomous regions of Açores and Madeira) as a country free from infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza viruses (HPAI), in accordance with [Chapter 10.4](#). Infection with High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza viruses and [Article 1.6.3](#). Procedures for Publication by the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) of a self-declaration of animal health status by a Member of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code)*. This declaration describes the outbreaks of HPAI subtype H5N1 in poultry in Portugal, which were confirmed from 12 November 2025 to date. Portugal formally requests WOAH to publish this self-declaration of country freedom from HPAI. The start date of the self-declaration is 13 March 2026. A statement of responsibility for this self-declaration is contained in Annex I.

2. Evidence that the disease is notifiable in the entire country

Avian Influenza is a notifiable disease as per article 5 of [Decree-law n.º 110/2007](#), of 16 April 2007, and article 18 of [Regulation \(EU\) 2016/429](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016. The higher risk areas for avian influenza are described in [Notice n.º 21](#), including biosecurity measures applicable to establishments located within these areas.

As the national animal health and phytosanitary authority, the national authority for veterinary medicines and the authority responsible for the management of the food safety system, DGAV is responsible for the definition, execution and evaluation of food security, animal health and protection, and plant health and protection policies. Within DGAV, at the central level, the activities related to animal health, namely disease surveillance, control and eradication, are carried out by the Directorate for Animal Protection (DSPA), specifically by the Epidemiology and Animal Health Unit (DESA). DSPA/DESA supervises the veterinary authorities responsible for implementing animal disease prevention and control measures at the regional and local levels. In Portugal, there are seven regional veterinary services:

- 5 in the Mainland – Directorates for Food and Veterinary of Norte, Centro, Lisboa, and Vale do Tejo, Alentejo and Algarve regions
- 1 in the Autonomous Regions of Açores – Regional Directorate of Agriculture, Veterinary and Food
- 1 in the Autonomous Regions of Madeira - Regional Directorate of Agriculture

These regional directorates are responsible for implementing all the activities related to animal health, namely disease surveillance, control and eradication, within their geographical area. In the Mainland's regional directorates, there are 6 Animal Protection Units, which carry out these activities at the local level (Local Veterinary Services):

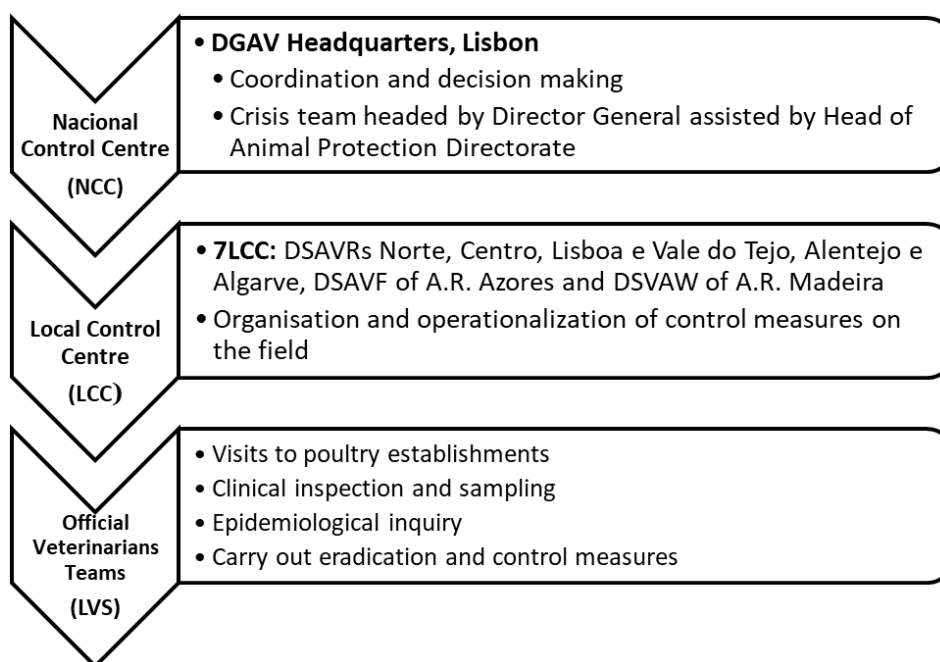
- 2 in Norte: Norte-Litoral and Norte- Interior;
- 1 in Centro;
- 1 in Lisboa and Vale do Tejo;
- 2 in Alentejo: Alentejo-Norte and Alentejo-Sul

In Algarve, the local level activities are carried out by the regional directorate itself.

In the Autonomous Region of Açores, the Regional Directorate of Agriculture, Veterinary and Food is the regional veterinary authority and coordinates and supervises the Agrarian Development Services, present in each of its 9 islands, responsible for carrying out activities at the local level.

In the Autonomous Region of Madeira, the Regional Directorate for Veterinary and Animal Welfare is the regional veterinary authority and is also responsible for coordinating as well as executing activities at the local level.

Upon detection of an HPAI outbreak, control and eradication measures are immediately implemented, as foreseen in [Delegated Regulation n.º 2020/687](#) and described in point 2. The following scheme shows the HPAI contingency plan's chain of command:



3. History of eradication of HPAI in the country

1. Avian Influenza situation in Portugal

Since 26 March 2025, the starting date of the previous self-declaration, 13 HPAI outbreaks in poultry were confirmed in Portugal. The final cleaning and disinfection of the last outbreaks was concluded on 13 February 2026. Details of the outbreaks are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Outbreaks of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in poultry in Portugal, from 2 September 2025 to date

Outbreak n.º	WAHIS report ID	WAHIS outbreak n.º	Municipality	HPAI confirmation date	Virus subtype	Suspicion type	Nº susceptible birds	Category	Holding type	Final Cleaning and disinfection completion date
2025/21	IN_176315	ob_163885	Benavente	02/09/2025	H5N1	Clinical	257650	Fattening ducks	Poultry farm	26/09/2025
2025/32	7015	OB_170231	Penafiel	12/11/2025	H5NX	Epidemiological link to an outbreak at a captive birds exhibition	566	Mixed poultry and captive birds	Mixed poultry and captive birds' collection	07/01/2026
2025/33	6759	OB_170625	Torres Vedras	12/11/2025	H5N1	Clinical	38209	Chicken breeders	Poultry farm	19/12/2025
2025/38	6759	OB_171312	Torres Vedras	17/11/2025	H5N1	Clinical	17186	Fattening turkeys	Poultry farm	11/12/2025
2025/40	6759	OB_172501	Torres Vedras	21/11/2025	H5N1	Clinical	12687	Fattening turkeys	Poultry farm	02/01/2026
2025/41	6759	OB_173087	Torres Vedras	28/11/2025	H5N1	Clinical	66366	Fattening ducks	Poultry farm	26/12/2025
2025/42	6759	OB_173316	Torres Vedras	02/12/2025	H5N1	Clinical	23400	Fattening ducks	Poultry farm	08/01/2026
2025/43	6759	OB_173794	Torres Vedras	03/12/2025	H5N1	Clinical	6512	Free-range broilers	Poultry farm	02/01/2026
2025/46	6759	OB_173903	Torres Vedras	03/12/2025	H5N1	Clinical	14631	Fattening turkeys	Poultry farm	09/01/2026
2025/47	6759	OB_174270	Tomar	06/12/2025	H5N1	Clinical	62435	Chicken breeders	Poultry farm	19/01/2026
2025/49	6759	OB_174449	Tomar	10/12/2025	H5N1	Clinical	14640	Fattening turkeys	Poultry farm	16/01/2026
2025/51	6759	OB_174708	Tomar	12/12/2025	H5N1	Clinical	580224	Laying hens	Poultry farm	13/02/2026
2025/53	6759	OB_175986	Tomar	15/12/2025	H5N1	Clinical	61672	Laying hens	Poultry farm	13/02/2026

A map showing the location of these outbreaks, as well as their protection zones (3 km radius) and surveillance zones (>3-10 km radius), is included in Annex II.

Except for Outbreak n.º 2025/32/OB_170231, which was caused by an H5 virus of undetermined neuraminidase type, in all other outbreaks, infection by the HPAI H5N1 virus was confirmed by Real-Time Reverse Transcriptase Polymerase Chain Reaction (rtRT-PCR). Viral subtyping, as well as determination of the pathogenicity level, were also carried out by rtRT-PCR or sequencing. All testing was carried out at the Instituto Nacional de Investigação Agrária e Veterinária, I.P. (INIAV, I.P.), which is the National Reference Laboratory for Animal Health (NRL).

Except for Outbreak n.º 2025/32/OB_170231, the affected establishments are located in higher-risk areas for the introduction of the avian influenza virus due to proximity to the sea and important bodies of water. Epidemiological investigations concluded that either direct or indirect contact with wild birds was the probable source of infection in most outbreaks. For outbreak n.º 2025/32/ OB_170231, an epidemiological link to a previous outbreak detected at an exhibition of captive birds existed, and outbreak 2025/43/ OB_173794 occurred in a farm belonging to the same producer as outbreak 2025/40/ OB_172501. These two farms had joint management and shared staff.

4. Control and eradication measures in response to avian influenza outbreaks

Except for outbreak 2025/32/OB_170231, in all outbreaks, following notification of a HPAI clinical suspicion, official veterinarians of the DGAV local services carried out visits to the suspected holding for clinical inspection, sampling and placing it under official control. Samples were immediately delivered to the NRL, and analytic results were available on

the same day or the next day. Regarding outbreak 2025/32/OB_170231, sampling was carried out on 7 November 2025 due to the identification of an epidemiological link to a previous outbreak in captive birds as explained above.

Upon each confirmation, DGAV issued an Edict determining reinforced biosecurity measures and movement restrictions to be enforced in the protection and surveillance zones. Simultaneously, control and eradication measures foreseen in [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2020/687](#) were carried out by teams of official veterinarians, or under their supervision, including:

- Quarantine and updated epidemiological enquiry, as well as traceability to assess if there were epidemiologically related holdings;
- Stamping out;
- Disposal of carcasses, by-products (manure) and waste according to [Regulation \(EC\) n.º 1069/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- Cleaning and disinfection of premises, vehicles, equipment and other contaminated objects;
- Tracing and recall of poultry products – poultry meat, table eggs, hatching eggs;
- Tracing of day-old chicks born from hatching eggs of affected chicken breeders' flocks and placing under official control and movement restrictions of the farms where they were kept;
- Implementation of restriction zones:
 - Protection zone – area within a circle of a 3 km radius centred on the infected premises;
 - Surveillance zone - area within a circle of a 10 km radius centred on the infected premises.

Within these restriction zones, the following measures are implemented:

- Inventory of all poultry holdings, which were notified of the restrictions implemented and of the obligation to report any suspicion of disease;
- All holdings located within the protection zone were visited by official veterinarians for clinical examination of the poultry and other captive birds, and sampling as needed;
- All commercial holdings located within the surveillance zone were also visited by official veterinarians for clinical examination of the poultry and sampling as needed;
- Reinforced surveillance within restriction zones:
 - Sampling for HPAI virus screening of flocks kept within the protection zone: all establishments keeping Anseriformes are sampled and those keeping other species are sampled accordingly to the results of the clinical examination. In the absence of mortality and if Galliformes birds are apparently healthy, no samples are taken, as recommended by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA);
 - All epidemiologically related establishments are visited by official veterinarians for clinical examination and sampling
 - Sampling for HPAI virus screening of flocks kept within the surveillance zone if clinical signs suggestive of HPAI are present and/or Anseriformes are kept;
 - Sampling for HPAI virus screening before movements carried out under granted derogations, according to Delegated Regulation [\(EU\) 2020/687](#).
- Movement restrictions and prohibitions:
 - No poultry or other captive birds, as well as eggs, for incubation or consumption, may enter or leave a holding without authorisation granted by DGAV;
 - Removal or spreading of used litter, manure or slurry from holdings is prohibited.
 - Removal of manure and used litter may be carried out when authorised by DGAV;
 - Transport of poultry meat from slaughterhouses, cutting plants and cold stores is prohibited unless authorised by DGAV;
 - Fairs, markets, shows, or other gatherings of poultry or other captive birds are prohibited;
 - Release of poultry for game birds restocking is prohibited.
- Reinforced biosecurity measures:
 - Preventing contact with wild birds;
 - Entrance of staff and visitors only when strictly necessary. Records of each visit must be kept in the holdings;

- All staff and visitors entering or leaving poultry holdings must strictly follow disinfection procedures;
- All parts of vehicles entering or leaving poultry holdings must be cleaned and disinfected;
- Dead birds (normal daily mortality) must be disposed of promptly according to Regulation (EC) 1069/2009;
- All vehicles and equipment used for transporting live poultry or other captive birds, meat, feed, manure, slurry, bedding and any other material or substances likely to be contaminated must be cleaned and disinfected after each transport and allowed to completely dry before any subsequent use.

Results of early warning /passive surveillance in poultry and reinforced surveillance within restriction zones

The results of testing within this scope for the year 2025 are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Results of testing (real-time RT-PCR), within the scope of the contingency plan, for High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza during 2025

Avian Influenza Contingency Plan/2025				
Surveillance type	Nº of tested establishments (including captive birds)	Nº of tested birds	Nº of positive establishments (including captive birds)	Nº of positive birds
Early warning/ Clinical suspicions	51	1371	15	110
Epidemiologically linked establishments	74	2642	2	26
Restriction zones	113	1073	7	53
Total	238	5086	24	189

Additionally, 70 mammals, of various species, which were exposed to infected birds were sampled for virological testing and all were negative.

5. Active surveillance programme in poultry

The licensing system of livestock production (NREAP), including poultry production, is described by [Decree-Law nº 81/2013 of 14th June](#). According with [Decree-Law nº 142/2006 of 27th July](#), and subsequent amendments, poultry establishments are also registered in the National System for Animal Information and Registration (SNIRA). All registered poultry establishments are assigned an individual alphanumeric code which identifies each establishment within the national territory. This registry contains data pertaining the establishment's keeper, its location, the species and number of birds under production and the type of production.

The Portuguese poultry production is mostly composed by *Gallus gallus*: broilers, which constitute around 62% of the total poultry population, laying hens (around 23%) and chicken breeders (around 7%). Turkeys and ducks represent around 3% and 1,7% of the poultry population, respectively, and quails make up around 2% of this population. The remaining population is constituted by game birds and a very small number of ratites. For the most part, these are indoor poultry and free-range production represents around 7% of the total population.

Portugal has been carrying out an avian influenza surveillance programme in poultry and wild birds since 2003. This programme includes both active and passive surveillance according to rules foreseen in annex II to [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2020/689](#) and in compliance with [Chapter 1.4.](#) and Articles [10.4.26.](#) to [10.4.30.](#) of the *Terrestrial Code*. Vaccination is prohibited, hence it is not practised in the country.

Poultry surveillance includes an early warning system, that is, notification and clinical as well as laboratory investigation of all disease suspicions and active surveillance. Until the end of 2021, poultry active surveillance was carried out according to annex I to [Commission Decision \(EC\) 2010/367](#) and was based on a representative sampling of holdings keeping the following poultry species and categories: chicken breeders, laying hens, free range laying hens, free range broilers, fattening turkeys, duck breeders, fattening ducks, ratites, gallinaceous game birds, waterfowl game birds and backyards flocks. Under this programme, chicken breeders, laying hens, free range laying hens and duck breeders were screened, by ELISA, twice a year and fattening ducks farms were tested two to three times a year, also by ELISA. Fattening

turkeys and free-range broilers were screened by ELISA once a year, and game birds, ratites and backyard flocks were tested by RT-PCR once a year.

Since January 2022, HPAI surveillance is risk-based as foreseen in [annex II](#) to Commission Delegated [Regulation \(EU\) 2020/689](#) and the objectives of the programme include early detection in poultry and wild birds, detection of HPAI in poultry species which generally do not show significant clinical signs, detection of circulating low pathogenic avian influenza viruses (LPAIV) that may easily spread between poultry flocks, in particular in areas with a high density of poultry establishments, in view of their potential to mutate to HPAI and contribution to increase knowledge on HPAI and LPAIV posing a potential zoonotic risk.

Being avian influenza, a notifiable disease, all suspicions of disease are within the scope of early detection of HPAI in poultry. The reporting of any sudden mortality increases in flocks or changes in production patterns, such as egg drop or marked decrease in feed and water consumption, is mandatory. Such reports are then thoroughly investigated by local veterinary services, through sampling, according to EFSA's recommendations, for avian influenza virus screening by RT-PCR. This sampling includes at least 5 dead birds and 20 oropharyngeal swabs, as well as 20 cloacal swabs. In case of absence of mortality, only the swabs will be collected. Results for this type of surveillance are shown above in Table 3.

Under the new legislation, active surveillance is risk-based and, therefore, all poultry holdings, keeping relevant poultry species and categories, located within areas of higher risk for introduction of avian influenza virus are tested. Active surveillance is also carried out in the remaining Portuguese territory, namely, in poultry high-density areas, based on a representative sampling of poultry farms and considering an estimated prevalence of 5% and 95% CI or 99% CI, for Galliformes and Anseriformes, respectively.

This new risk-based programme includes the following poultry categories: breeding ducks, fattening ducks, waterfowl game birds, quails, laying hens, free range laying hens, fattening turkeys and gallinaceous game birds. All poultry categories will be tested by RT-PCR, except laying hens, including free range, and fattening turkeys, which will be screened by serology (ELISA). The frequency of sampling will be as follows:

- Laying hens (including free range) – twice a year;
- Fattening turkeys – once a year;
- Galliformes game birds – once a year;
- Duck breeders – twice a year;
- Fattening ducks – 2 to 3 times a year;
- Waterfowl game birds – twice a year.

All sampling is carried out by official veterinarians, either at poultry farms or at slaughterhouses when flocks are slaughtered.

HPAI active surveillance programme results for the last five years are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 – Results of the annual active surveillance of HPAI in domestic birds

Avian Influenza Active Surveillance Programme	2021		2022		2023		2024		2025		Total	
Nº establishments tested by active surveillance	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS
Chicken breeders	41	0	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	41	0
Laying hens (including free-range laying hens)	91	0	90	0	83	0	97	0	97	0	458	0
Free-range broilers	53	0	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	53	0
Fattening turkeys	62	0	67	0	65	0	58	0	73	0	325	0
Ducks - Breeders and fattening	17	0	20	1	25	0	22	0	20	0	104	1
Ratites	3	0	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	3	0
Game birds - gallinaceous and waterfowl	32	0	32	0	36	0	37	0	37	0	174	0
Quails	a)	a)	14	0	12	0	11	0	10	0	47	0
Backyard flocks	58	0	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	58	0
Total	357	0	223	1	221	0	225	0	237	0	1263	1

a) With the changes already explained, these categories are no longer tested under active surveillance

6. Wild bird surveillance

Early detection of HPAI virus circulation among wild bird populations is included in the avian influenza surveillance programme.

The collection of samples from wild birds is performed mostly by official veterinarians of the local veterinary services, field workers of the Institute for Nature Conservation and Forestry, IP (ICNF), by special brigades of the National Republican Guard and Police Force and by the municipality veterinarians. Nature conservation organisations, bird ringing teams, hunters and ornithologists may also collaborate in the sample collection.

All mass mortality events of wild birds must be notified to DGAV, either at the central or local level. Personnel of the above-listed organisations regularly carry out routine rounds in protected natural areas and in rural areas where dead wild birds can be found. Also, wounded, diseased and or dead wild birds entering wild bird rescue centres can be sampled. Upon detection of dead or injured wild birds, local veterinary services are contacted, and sampling is carried out by official veterinarians, ICNF personnel or municipal veterinarians and then validated by DGAV local services. These samples are either the whole dead wild bird, or oropharyngeal and cloacal swabs. The local services are responsible for the delivery of samples to the NRL, where testing by RT-PCR is performed.

DGAV and ICNF developed an application for reporting dead wild animals, called ANIMAS, accessible to the public at <https://animas.icnf.pt/>. Reports submitted by the public on ANIMAS, including dead wild birds, are subsequently evaluated by DGAV and, if necessary, sampling of these birds is carried out by official veterinarians.

Until January 2022, only one case of HPAI infection in wild birds had been detected in Portugal: a grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*), found dead at Loulé, Algarve, in January 2017, which tested positive for H5N8. Since January 2022, several wild birds positive for HPAI have been detected, all in mainland Portugal and mostly in coastal areas, as shown in Table 4. In 2025, a total of 176 wild birds were sampled, of which 33 were positive, corresponding to 29 outbreaks, 28 being of the H5N1 subtype and one H5N6 subtype.

Table 4 – Results of the annual passive surveillance of HPAI in wild birds in the last four years

Year	Nº of wild birds tested	Nº of negative wild birds	Nº of HPAI-positive wild birds
2022	181	163	18
2023	175	169	6
2024	123	112	11
2025	176	143	33
Total	655	587	68

7. Measures implemented to maintain freedom

Apart from enforcing national and European legislation and after risk assessment, additional measures, including biosecurity procedures, aimed at preventing outbreaks of avian influenza in poultry and other kept birds are determined by DGAV through the publication of Edicts and Notices. Currently, [Edict n.º 48](#) and [Notice n.º 21](#) are in force.

Furthermore, an [avian influenza dedicated page on the DGAV web portal](#) containing relevant information for stakeholders and the public is continuously updated and, in case of confirmation of outbreaks, press releases and edicts are also publicised on the DGAV main webpage.

In November 2024, an awareness campaign for poultry keepers, including backyard flocks, comprising a video and a poster, was launched and was widely publicised through DGAV social media and web portal. At launch, these awareness materials were also sent to relevant stakeholders, namely, the poultry industry associations. The video and poster are available at the DGAV web portal at <https://www.dgav.pt/destaques/noticias/gripe-aviaria-como-prevenir/> as well as on the avian influenza dedicated webpage.

In September 2025, the European Food Safety Authority and the European Commission launched a new campaign aimed at raising awareness about the importance of biosecurity for preventing HPAI outbreaks, including a toolkit designed to

assist farmers, particularly those with small and medium-sized farms. This campaign, called [#NoBirdFlu](#), is being extensively publicised by DGAV through its [web portal](#) as well as through social media:

- <https://www.dgav.pt/destaques/noticias/mantenha-a-gripe-aviaria-afastada/>
- <https://www.dgav.pt/destaques/noticias/campanha-nobirdflu-proteja-as-suas-aves-da-gripe-aviaria/>
- <https://www.dgav.pt/destaques/noticias/detecao-e-prevencao-da-gripe-aviaria-campanha-nobirdflu/>
- <https://www.dgav.pt/destaques/noticias/campanha-nobirdflu-prevencao-da-gripe-aviaria/>
- [Facebook](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)

Regular information and awareness meetings with poultry industry stakeholders are also carried out, with an emphasis on HPAI preventive measures and a [Biosecurity Manual for Poultry Holdings](#) was developed by poultry industry associations in collaboration with DGAV. All imports of poultry, poultry products and by-products are carried out according to provisions of Chapter 10.4 of the *Terrestrial Code* as well as according to [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 692/2020](#) and [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2021/404](#). Intra-EU trade of the aforementioned commodities is carried out as foreseen in [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2020/688](#), of the European Parliament and of the Council, [Regulation \(EC\) 1069/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council and [Regulation \(EU\) 142/2011](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council.

7. Conclusions

Considering that:

- Infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza viruses is a notifiable disease in Portugal;
- All outbreaks of infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza were handled according to [Article 10.4.6 of the *Terrestrial Code*](#) ;
- Control measures for all poultry outbreaks included stamping out and cleaning and disinfection of affected holdings according to procedures approved by DGAV on the dates shown in Table 1, and the last such date is 13 February 2026;
- More than 28 days have elapsed since the end of the cleaning and disinfection of the premises affected by the last outbreak as prescribed in Article 10.4.6. of the *Terrestrial Code*;
- Surveillance has been carried out in accordance with Articles 10.4.26 to 10.4.30. of the *Terrestrial Code*;
- Commodities are imported in accordance with Articles 10.4.7 to 10.4.22. of the *Terrestrial Code*; and
- There are ongoing awareness programmes on HPAI regarding the notification of suspicion of disease and to disseminate information concerning preventive measures.

The Delegate of Portugal to WOAHP declares that the country complies with the requirements for a country free from infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza viruses (HPAI) in poultry as of 13 March 2026, in accordance with Chapter 1.6. and Article 10.4.6. of the *Terrestrial Code* (2025) and consistent with the information provided to the WOAHP-WAHIS system.

Annex I

Statement to be included in the self-declaration document.

I, the undersigned, Susana Isabel Ferreira Guedes Pombo, Delegate of Portugal to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), takes responsibility for the self-declaration of freedom from

High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) in poultry

(disease)

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Drawn up on 9/April/2026

Signature of the Delegate:

Susana
Guedes
Pombo

Assinado de forma digital por
Susana Guedes Pombo
DN: c=PT, title=Diretor Geral,
ou=Gabinete da Diretora Geral,
o=Direção Geral de Alimentação e
Veterinária, sn=Guedes Pombo,
givenName=Susana, cn=Susana
Guedes Pombo
Dados: 2026.04.09 17:47:49 +01'00'

Annex II – HPAI outbreaks' map

