



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Template Version 2.09

Voluntary Report - public distribution

Date: 3/31/2006

GAIN Report Number: SW6009

Sweden

Livestock and Products

Avian Influenza Update

2006

Approved by:

Margaret Thursland
Agricultural Counselor
U.S. Embassy Stockholm

Prepared by:

Asa Lexmon
Agricultural Specialist

Report Highlights:

As of March 30, 2006, a total of 29 cases of the highly aggressive H5 virus have been confirmed in wild birds, including two birds of prey. In addition, the aggressive form of AI has been found in one mallard duck at a game farm and one mink.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Stockholm [SW1]
[SW]

Since the aggressive form of the avian influenza (AI) virus, H5, was first confirmed in two mallard ducks in southern Sweden on February 28, 2006 (GAIN Report SW6006), the virus has been steadily traveling north. As of March 30, 2006, a total of 29 cases have been confirmed in wild birds, including two birds of prey. In addition, the aggressive form of AI has been found in one mallard duck at a game farm and one mink. (Please see Table 1.)

Expectations are that Swedish poultry consumption will decline slightly due to the AI situation in Europe. Despite the fact that the aggressive form of AI is now present in Sweden, local consumers still have higher confidence in domestic poultry than imported.

Aggressive AI in Domestic Bird

On March 17, the aggressive form of H5 was confirmed in a mallard duck located on a preserve for wild birds. The preserve is located within the surveillance zone established in response to the first AI outbreak in Sweden at the end of February. All birds within the preserve (about 500 mallard ducks and 150 pheasants) were killed and destroyed according to EU requirements for AI in domestic poultry.

Central Stockholm Hit by AI

On March 21, the aggressive form of AI was confirmed in two dead swans found in central Stockholm. The two sites where the swans were found are both in densely populated areas. Protection and monitoring zones were established according to EU regulations but no areas were blocked off as there were no signs of increased mortality among wild birds in the affected areas. Humans within the zones were not affected by the restrictions imposed, apart from those keeping domestic birds.

The popular open-air museum and zoological park Skansen is located within the protection and monitoring zones. The Skansen zoo specializes in Scandinavian wildlife and keeps a number of different birds. Fortunately, Skansen received permission from Swedish authorities to vaccinate their birds prior to the Stockholm outbreak. In addition, the Skansen birds are kept indoors according to restrictions imposed in response to the finding of AI on the German island of Rügen.

AI Found in a Swedish Mink

On March 27, the Swedish Board of Agriculture announced that the aggressive form of AI had been found in a wild mink in Solvesborg in Southern Sweden. The mink, showing symptoms including disorientation and poor balance, was captured and tested for AI. The mink likely became infected by eating an infected bird.

A smew and a goosander found in the same area also carried the virus. A common surveillance zone and two protection zones have been established in the area.

The mink industry is encouraged to remain vigilant regarding flu symptoms in their animals.

Table 1. Confirmed Cases of Aggressive H5 in Sweden

DATE	AFFECTED ANIMALS	LOCATION	H5N1 confirmation*
February 28	2 mallard ducks	Oskarshamn, Småland	March 16
March 2	1 mallard duck	Oskarshamn, Småland	
March 3	4 mallard ducks	Oskarshamn, Småland	
March 8	1 wild duck (scaup), 3 mallard ducks	Oxelösund, Södermanland	
March 9	1 eagle owl	Nyköping, Södermanland	
March 10	2 mallard ducks	Gotland	
March 13	1 buzzard	Oxelösund, Södermanland	
March 16	5 tufted ducks, 1 scaup	Fårösund, Gotland	
March 17	1 mallard duck	Karlskrona, Blekinge	
March 17	1 wild duck (on preserve)	Oskarshamn, Småland	
March 20	1 swan, 1 mute swan	Central Stockholm	
March 23	2 mute swans, 1 goose	Central Stockholm	
March 27	1 smew, 1 goosander, 1 mink	Solvesborg, Blekinge	

* Please note that H5N1 has only been officially confirmed in the first two findings of highly pathogenic H5 in Sweden. According to the National Veterinary Institute, all of the above H5 cases are likely H5N1. Confirmatory test results are expected in the near future.