

# **Appendix K**

## ***Sentinel Bird Program***

Sentinel birds may be used in a vaccination programs for an LPAI affected flock, in determination of safety to repopulate after C&D of an infected premises, in determining virus presence prior to slaughter of spent hens in an LPAI affected flock, and for other uses as deemed necessary by the ODA. ODA will seek additional recommendations from the USDA's Standard Operating Procedures HPAI Task Force Manual and the National Avian Influenza Response Plan, August 2006

### **Procedure for Obtaining Sentinel Birds**

1. Prospective sentinel birds must be healthy, unvaccinated against Newcastle/Avian Influenza disease, old enough to ensure good survivability, and tested for PMV-1 / AI antibodies prior to placement, with the exception of SPF birds. SPF sentinel birds may be ordered from Charles River, but a two-month lead-time is necessary for 7-week-old pullets. The contact is Monica Wilson. Her phone number is (860) 889-1389, and her email address is [Mwilson@criver.com](mailto:Mwilson@criver.com).
2. In the event that sentinel birds are needed in a more timely fashion, they may be ordered from any MG/MS/SE NPIP certified flock and tested for AI/END on arrival.
3. Only "clean" personnel will handle birds. Task Force personnel handling sentinel birds should wear protective clothing.
4. All equipment used with sentinel birds, including but not limited to cages, transport boxes, feeders, and waterers, must be cleaned and disinfected.
5. Clean feeders, waterers, and shavings will be placed for the birds before their arrival.

### **Procedures for Selecting Premises for Sentinel Birds**

1. Sentinel birds will be placed 21 days after cleaning and disinfection has been completed in a biosecure area. There should be no free roaming chickens left in the area.
2. Sentinel birds will be used to determine absence of virus in flocks vaccinated against LPAI (see Appendix E).
3. Sentinel birds shall be used to determine the absence or presence of virus in spent hens that have been exposed to LPAI and are scheduled for slaughter.

### **Procedure for Placing Sentinel Birds on Premises That Have Been C&Ded**

1. Open premises that had free running chickens require a minimum of five birds placed in cages. Premises with houses require a minimum of three birds per room. For example, a premises with two horse barns containing six stalls in each would require 36 birds. If conditions permit, birds may be given free access to the interior of the rooms. That is, cages may be left open, and birds just placed in the room. If there are no doors, etc., birds may need to be placed in cages and moved from cage-to-cage each day. In addition, at least five birds in cages will be placed on the premises outside of the buildings in such a manner as to prevent predation.
2. Program managers will place wing bands on the birds, and record the tag numbers used for each premises in the tracking database.
3. Clean and secure housing will be required to maintain the birds from the time that they are delivered to the Task Force until they are placed on premises. Biosecurity standard operating procedures will be followed when Task Force personnel handle and transport the birds.
4. Clean and secure transport to premises will be required for the birds.
5. Wire cages will be provided as needed for individual premises.
6. Feed and water for the birds at each premises will be assured.
7. Premises owners will have their duties explicitly outlined. A cooperative agreement and compensation package will be detailed. That agreement will specify the following: owners will feed and water the birds if possible; owners will move the birds around the premises as specified; owners will report any signs of disease in birds as it occurs, and every week if the birds remain healthy; owners will allow Task Force inspectors access to the birds at any time; owners will understand that birds will be collected at the end of the sentinel surveillance period, and will not be given to them.
8. Task Force members will place birds in planned locations.
9. Those placing the birds will leave adequate feed for a week, and leave a procedure handout (in both English and Spanish) with the owner after reviewing it with them using an interpreter as needed.

### **Procedures for Placing Sentinel Birds With LPAI Vaccination Program**

General procedures regarding biosecurity, ID and care of the birds shall be carried out as above. Specifics concerning a vaccination program may be found in Appendix E.

### **Procedures For Placing Sentinel Birds before Disposal Of Spent Hens In An LPAI Affected Flock**

General procedures regarding biosecurity, ID and care of the birds shall be carried out as above.

1. Sentinel birds shall be placed one month before scheduled slaughter of hens.
2. Thirty birds shall be randomly place in 15 cages throughout the laying house.

### **Procedures Following the Placement of Sentinel Birds (HPAI)**

1. Premises owners will monitor the health of sentinel birds for the 21-day period, if owners agree to conscientiously report disease. If owners perform monitoring, Task Force members will conduct random oversight. Bird health may have to be monitored by Task Force personnel at least once per week. Sick or dead birds need to be promptly picked up and submitted to the laboratory for diagnostics by the operations group.
2. Program managers will work to monitor the birds and will enter owner telephone reports into the database.
3. Program managers will dispatch crews to premises periodically to visually inspect the birds, to feed and water them as needed (some owners refuse to care for the birds) and to deliver additional feed as needed.
4. Program managers will record inspection results in the database and the EMRS.
5. Any dead birds will be bagged for transport to the laboratory. Surviving birds will be submitted to the laboratory after the sentinel period is completed for diagnostics.
6. The sentinel program will be terminated for a given premises if birds survive the 21 day test period.
7. Program managers will collect a statistical number of cloacal swabs and blood samples from the birds for submission to the laboratory.
8. Program managers will record the number of birds remaining.

#### **Procedures Following the Placement of Sentinel Birds For LPAI Vaccination Monitoring**

See Appendix E.

#### **Procedures Following the Placement of Sentinel Birds With Aged Hens**

Sentinel birds shall be tested by serology at two and four weeks post placement. Negative results will allow the hens to go to slaughter. Positive results will lead to RT-PCR and/or virus isolation testing of cloacal and oropharyngeal swabs from the sentinel birds. If the presence of virus is confirmed in the sentinel birds, the spent hens will not be sent to slaughter.

