



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Animal and Plant Health Agency
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Our Ref: ATIC2752

[REDACTED]
{By Email}

20 May 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

PROVISION OF REQUESTED INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information about Avian Influenza, which APHA received on 26 April 2022. Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000.

The information you requested and the response is detailed below:

“Please advise the PCR cycles being used when testing for avian influenza H5N1 and details of what exactly the PCR tests deployed are designed to detect, i.e. are they testing for a specific virus, virus fragment, protein or similar.

Please provide any evidence of an isolated, purified H5N1 virus.

If you have any evidence of an isolated, purified H5N1 virus, please provide evidence using Rivers Postulate or similar that it has been proven to cause avian influenza.”

1. Yes we can signpost you to our lab protocol on flu global net <https://science.vla.gov.uk/fluglobalnet/> which has all the precise details on the laboratory protocols tab H5 real time PCR.
2. APHA have isolated purified virus from almost all GB poultry cases n=112.
3. We have not directly tested for Rivers postulate but will be performing specific studies in the next 3 months. However importantly this information below is relevant
1. We have descriptive pathology in most if not all species affected which show association of the virus with specified pathology consistent with disease presentation

- II. We have demonstrated repeatedly and on every occasion severe whole system tropism of this virus in clinically ill birds with very high viral load in the brain and therefore associated with death.
- III. Other groups in Europe have conducted direct infection studies according to international standards and produced high severity outcomes (pathogenicity index of 3.0 the highest maximum score).

Information disclosed in response to this FOI request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOI and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on GOV.UK, together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

An Annex is attached which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you and contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact the Access to Information Team at the email address below or postal address at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

ACCESS TO INFORMATION TEAM

Email: enquiries@apha.gov.uk

Annex

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Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request, you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to the Access to Information Manager at the address at the top of this letter or email enquiries@apha.gov.uk and the team will arrange for an internal review of your case.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted APHA's own complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Coronavirus

If you need to contact the ICO during the Coronavirus pandemic, it's best to do so online. Please click [here](#) for contact details. You can also call them on 0303 123 1113.