



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Animal and Plant Health Agency
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Our Ref: ATIC3093

[REDACTED]
{By Email}

27 April 2023

Dear [REDACTED]

PROVISION OF REQUESTED INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information about avian influenza data, which the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) received on 11 April 2023. Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000.

The information you requested and the response is detailed below:

“In light of the ongoing restrictions relating to the current outbreak of avian flu could you provide me with the following information if available;

1. In relation to monitoring and assessment what methodology is being used to determine avian flu infection, eg PCR tests, lab based assessment etc.

APHA can confirm that:

lab based assessment, including real-time PCR tests,
virus isolation in embryonated fowls' eggs,
haemagglutination inhibition tests to look for antibody to H5 and H7 (denoting past exposure to AI),
whole genome sequencing,
and post-mortem examination is being used to determine avian flu infection.

2. Where PCR tests are the method used for determination of infection could you provide details of the cycle rate being used or recommended for use by DEFRA.

For all the avian influenza PCR tests run during the outbreak, positive/negative status of the test sample is determined by the appearance (positive) or absence (negative) of a signal by PCR cycle number 36. This value has been determined through extensive validation of each PCR test against panels of positive and negative reference samples.

3. With regards to positive identification of avian flu within the captive bird populations can you confirm the number of birds positively confirmed to have had

avian flu as apposed to those the number euthanised due to the presence of 1 or more infected birds?”

This information is not held by APHA.

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

Please click [here](#) for further contact details.