

Abstract compartmentalisation

Biosecurity measures for compartments with respect to avian influenza: practical aspects

Commission Regulation (EC) No 616/2009 applies to compartments with respect to avian influenza. This regulation covers aspects related to biosecurity measures.

It is not too difficult to determine the criteria for a high level of biosecurity and prescribe the preventive measures to be taken. However, implementing all these measures in such way that they are effective is a great challenge.

Defining effectiveness is a subject of ongoing discussion. Does it mean that the risk of introduction and spread of avian influenza is zero? This seems unrealistic, as there are still gaps in knowledge about the ways the virus is introduced and spread, and the way in which it survives.

It is more realistic to consider that we can be confident Avian Influenza will not be spread or introduced to and from a compartment if all the possible biosecurity measures are taken. Here, the importance of HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) becomes clear. Not all risks of contamination with the avian influenza virus can be totally excluded: Wild water birds prefer agricultural areas as a habitat; poultry have to be transported; it is not possible to control wind, which transports particles with possible attached viruses; human error, etc.

The compartment manager will have to clarify how these risks are controlled and what the corrective measures will be in case of non-compliance.

A critical factor for success is mutual unconditional confidence between the compartment and the Competent Authority. Both have to be absolutely clear about what they can expect and what they can do.

This lecture will address the aspects of biosecurity measures in an approved compartment with respect to avian influenza in the Netherlands.