



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK AND SUPPLY
SECRETARIAT OF AGRICULTURAL DEFENSE
DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HEALTH

DEPARTMENT OF INSPECTION OF PRODUCTS OF ANIMAL ORIGIN

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply, BLOCO D - Bairro Zona Cívico-Administrativa, Brasília/DF, Postal Code 70043900

Phone: (61) 3218-3222

Official Letter - Joint Circular Letter No. 3/2021/DSA/DIPOA/SDA/MAPA

Brasília, May 5, 2021.

Subject: Surveillance procedures for Respiratory and Nervous Syndrome (RNS) in poultry at meatpacking plants

1. Based on Decree no. 10.253, dated February 20, 2020, Directive no. 562, dated April 11, 2017, Decree no. 5.741, dated March 30, 2016 and Decree no. 9.013, dated March 29, 2017, the Director of the Department of Animal Health and the Director of the Department of Inspection of Products of Animal Origin do hereby establish the RNS surveillance procedures to be adopted at meatpacking plants.
2. A reassessment was done of the criteria for surveillance of avian influenza (AI) and Newcastle disease (ND), diseases that are part of Respiratory and Nervous Syndrome (RNS) in poultry, with the need to **update surveillance procedures at meatpacking plants**, as set forth in this document and represented in the flow attached hereto (15035290).
3. To implement the new procedures, changes were made to the Annex to SDA Normative Instruction no. 17, dated April 7, 2006 (15035286), through Directive no. 275, dated April 16, 2021 (15035289), and on the criteria for suspected cases established in the Technical Forms for the respective target diseases, as drafted by the DSA, aimed at early detection of AI and ND.
4. At **meatpacking plants, the criteria for reporting a suspected case will be solely based on identifying poultry with clinical signs or lesions (neurological, respiratory or digestive), or even the presence of dying or dead birds on the receiving platform, compatible with RNS.** This assessment is at the discretion of the official inspection service veterinarian, noting the clinical and epidemiological criteria of the diseases. In this case, the official inspection service should immediately notify the animal health service at the local veterinary unit (or UVL) of the Agricultural Health Execution Agencies (or OESA), to provide care for the meatpacking plant, considering the speed required by the situation.
5. **Assessment of information related to animal health:**
 - 5.1. When the Public Health Veterinarian (or MVS) declares on the Health Bulletin (or BS) that mortality exceeded the established limit, a document must be attached as proof of care by the animal health service at the poultry establishment (inspection agreement, declaration or certificate).

Note:

- a. *investigative forms (FORM-IN or FORM-COM) do not comply with this stipulation and should not be used; and*

- b. *the BS must be issued according to SDA Normative Instruction no. 100, dated October 2, 2020 (15035291).*

5.2. In the absence of the document mentioned in item 5.1 and considering early submission of documentation, as set forth in Paragraph 1 of Article 32 of SDA NI no. 100/2020, the official inspection service will notify the party responsible for the meatpacking plant regarding submission of the aforementioned document, which is the condition for sending poultry from the center for slaughter.

5.3. After the poultry has arrived at the meatpacking plant, in relation to a failure to comply resulting from a lack of notification of a suspected case at poultry establishments, due to a possible mortality rate in excess of DSA-established limits, or in relation to a failure to submit the document covered in Item 5.1, the party responsible for the meatpacking plant must immediately notify the official inspection service of this occurrence, with the proper clarifications, for the purposes of authorizing slaughter, as set forth in Paragraph 1 of Article 27 of SDA NI no. 100/2020. The official inspection service may intensify poultry inspection. When there is no identification of any poultry with clinical signs or lesions and morbidity compatible with RNS, the official inspection service must rule out the suspected case, proceeding to regular slaughter, without requiring care by the animal health service at the meatpacking plant. The official inspection service must provide notice to the animal health service at the UVL of the corresponding OESA regarding the incident for acknowledge and adoption of the appropriate administrative measures.

6. Assessment of poultry in the *ante mortem* and *post mortem* inspection exams:

6.1. **When poultry with clinical signs or lesions compatible with RNS** are found in the *ante mortem* inspection; or

6.2. When poultry with **clinical signs or lesions compatible with RNS** are found in the *post mortem* inspection (*in this case, also take under discretionary consideration any clinical signs and epidemiological evidence of RNS, including through assessment of documents with information inherent to the poultry establishment, rate of morbidity, and more*);

The official inspection service must:

- a. isolate the suspected lot of poultry (Article 92 – RIISPOA);
- b. prohibit live poultry from leaving the meatpacking plant (Section II of Article 92 – RIISPOA);
- c. immediately and directly provide notice of the suspected RNS to the UVL of the corresponding OESA, preferably by phone, considering the speed required by this situation, aimed at swift care (clinical and epidemiological investigation) by the animal health service at the meatpacking plant (Article 92 – RIISPOA); and
- d. without prejudice to the provisions of item "c," the head of the SIPOA must be immediately contacted by phone and a full notification sent by e-mail to the animal health service (SISA and OESA) in the meatpacking plant's jurisdiction, with a detailed description of the incident and information on the contact by phone with the UVL, as well as pertinent documents and evidence, for follow-up and support in the investigation.

Note:

- a. *the SISAs are responsible for informing and keeping up to date the telephone and e-mail contact information for the UVLs at the OESAs, located in the jurisdictions of the SIPOAs. Internal communications from the inspection service will be defined by DIPOA; and*
- b. *for the purposes of epidemiological investigation, an Electronic Information System (or SEI) process should not be instituted, considering the use of the system specific for animal health*

investigations, the e-SISBRAVET. The animal health veterinarian responsible for the care must immediately register the investigation performed at the meatpacking plant and at the poultry establishment of origin, according to the information flow defined by the DSA for immediately notifiable diseases.

7. Care (clinical and epidemiological investigation) by the animal health service at the meatpacking plant:

7.1. The official inspection service veterinarian responsible for identifying and notifying the suspected case at the meatpacking plant must accompany the animal health veterinarian who will provide care, so as to present the evidence that led to notification and support actions necessary for clinical examination, collection of samples and surveying of information on the poultry establishment of origin.

7.2. When the animal health service rules out a suspected case of RNS, the investigation should be concluded and poultry released for slaughter, **without collecting samples**. The animal health service will issue a specific document (inspection agreement, declaration or certificate) for the meatpacking plant and for the official inspection service, and will register the notification and investigation in the e-SISBRAVET.

7.3. When the investigation by the animal health service characterizes a probable case of RNS, the following measures will be adopted:

By the animal health service

- a. collection and mailing of samples to the Federal Agricultural Protection Laboratory (or LFDA) (accompanied by FORM-LAB);
- b. issuance of evidentiary documentation of care, with the result of the investigation (inspection agreement, declaration or certificate);
- c. adoption of actions at the poultry establishment of origin, as set forth in the Contingency Plan for AI and ND of the National Poultry Health Program (or PNSA); and
- d. adoption of appropriate measures along with responsible parties, regarding the non-notification of the suspected case.

By the official inspection service

- a. separate slaughter of the suspected lot (Article 91 – RIISPOA);
- b. provisional apprehension of the products in the suspected lot and of those with a risk for cross-contamination and spread of the disease (Article 495 – RIISPOA); and
- c. immediately order the cleaning and disinfection of locations, equipment and utensils that may have been contaminated (Article 92 – RIISPOA).

Note: *these same measures must be adopted in all establishments that may have received poultry from the suspected lot.*

7.4. After the animal health service concludes the investigation and rules out AI and ND:

- a. will cease interdiction of the poultry establishment; and
- b. will notify the official inspection service of the conclusion of the investigation into suspected AI and ND, aimed at releasing products and surveying any restrictions.

7.5. When the animal health service characterizes a **confirmed case** of AI or ND, an **Animal Health Emergency** will be declared and the official inspection service will decide on the destination of products apprehended, through a risk assessment and according to DSA guidelines.

8. Collection of samples at meatpacking plant by the inspection service for surveillance of RNS is suspended.

9. In accordance with Section III of Paragraph 2 of Article 5 of SDA NI no. 17/2006, the DSA will provide advance notice and guidance on the sample collection procedures for active surveillance, **when applicable to meatpacking plants.**

10. The following documents are hereby revoked: DSA Official Circular Letter no. 7, dated January 24, 2007; DSA Official Circular Letter no. 44, dated April 10, 2007; DSA Official Circular Letter no. 02, dated August 2, 2007; DSA Official Circular Letter no. 157, dated October 30, 2007; CSA Memorandum no. 86, dated July 21, 2008; Official Circular Letter no. 102 /2010/DSA, dated June 28, 2010; and Official Letter no. 76/2020/DSAV/CAT/CGSA/DSA/SDA/MAPA, dated April 13, 2020.

11. We hereby declare that this Official Circular Letter replaces Joint Official Circular Letter no. 2/2021/DSA/DIPOA/SDA/MAPA, dated April 19, 2021 (14794797) and is published on the PGA-SIGSIF notice board.

Sincerely,