



MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

No: 10

Series of 2023

SUBJECT : DECLARATION OF SOUTH COTABATO AS AVIAN INFLUENZA FREE PROVINCE

WHEREAS, the Province of South Cotabato had recorded four (4) laboratory confirmed cases of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Subtype H5N1, three (3) of which were located in the Municipality of Santo Niño, dated March 31, May 11 and May 12, 2022 affecting native chickens and ducks. While one (1) case was detected in the Municipality of Tantangan on September 8, 2022 affecting a commercial chicken layer farm;

WHEREAS, upon detection of the disease, the Local Government Unit (LGU) of the Province of South Cotabato and the Municipality of Santo Niño and Tantangan, in coordination with Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office XII (DA RFO XII) and the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), conducted disease investigation, immediate depopulation, cleaning and disinfection, movement restrictions and surveillance in the affected premises following the Avian Influenza Protection Program (AIPP) guidelines;

WHEREAS, results of subsequent disease monitoring in the 1-km and 7-km surveillance zones surrounding the affected farms yielded negative test results for influenza type A virus. The last HPAI H5N1 laboratory detection in South Cotabato was on 8 September 2022;

WHEREAS, Article 10.4.6. of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH, founded as OIE), Terrestrial Animal Health Code (2021) provides that the Avian Influenza free status of a previously free country or zone may be regained after a minimum period of 28 days after a stamping-out policy has been completed; disinfection of the last affected establishment was carried out and that consequent surveillance demonstrated the absence of infection;

WHEREAS, prior to the confirmation of the first case of HPAI H5N1 in South Cotabato, the province had been free from Avian Influenza in poultry and through the joint efforts of the LGU, DARFO, and BAI applying effective disease control measures such as stamping out, cleaning and disinfection and other quarantine activities, the risk of further spread from infected premises were effected without delay; and that more than forty (40) days have elapsed since the end of the clean-up and disinfection operations; and surveillance has been carried out in accordance with the WOAH Terrestrial Animal Health Code and the AIPP with the province of South Cotabato yielded negative AI test results;

NOW THEREFORE, I, DOMINGO F. PANGANIBAN, Senior Undersecretary of the Department of Agriculture, in accordance with the authority vested in me, do hereby declare the Avian Influenza-Free Status of the province of Quezon.

Done this 27th of February 2023.

DOMINGO F. PANGANIBAN
Senior Undersecretary