

**MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR**No: 44

Series of 2024

SUBJECT: DECLARATION OF LEYTE AS AVIAN INFLUENZA FREE PROVINCE

WHEREAS, the Province of Leyte had recorded one (1) confirmed case of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Subtype H5N1 which was confirmed through laboratory testing using RT-PCR. The case was detected in the municipality of Kananga on March 19, 2024, affecting broiler breeder chickens.

WHEREAS, upon detection of the disease, the Provincial Government of Leyte and the concerned municipal government, in coordination with the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office VIII (DA RFO VIII) 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, continued disease monitoring and surveillance in the 1-km and 7-km surveillance zones surrounding the affected farms yielded negative test results for influenza type A virus;

WHEREAS, Article 10.4.6. of the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH, founded as OIE), Terrestrial Animal Health Code (2022) 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 Leyte 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 operations, biosecurity and other quarantine activities, the risk of further spread from infected premises were affected without delay.

WHEREAS, more than ninety (90) days have elapsed since the end of the cleaning and disinfection operations and that surveillance activities yielded negative AI test results;

WHEREAS, any reported evidence of confirmed AI incursion within the province will cause immediate notification to concerned offices (RVQS, RADDL, DARFO, PVO/PAO, CVO/CAO, MVO/MAO/MMO) and consequent revocation of this memorandum circular;

NOW THEREFORE, I, FRANCISCO P. TIU LAUREL, JR., Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, in accordance with the authority vested in me, do hereby declare Leyte as Avian Influenza Free Province.

Done this 29th of OCTOBER 2024.


FRANCISCO P. TIU LAUREL JR.
Secretary

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