



Here We Go: Great Britain Government Requires Home-Grown Chickens to be Registered to Tackle Bird Flu

Description

UK: It's all about control.

People in Great Britain who keep chickens in their yards are forced to register them with the government under a new proposed law to stop the spread of bird flu.

As part of the ongoing efforts to combat avian influenza, the government of England, Wales, and Scotland introduced a proposal on Wednesday that would make it mandatory for all poultry keepers to formally register their birds.

The new rules would apply to all bird keepers, no matter how many birds they own. Currently, only people who [keep 50 birds or more](#) are required by law to do so.

Under the rule, people who keep birds as pets or for food production (i.e., eggs) will be forced to register as well. Failure to do so is a violation of the law. They would also be required to update their information every year.

The owners are required to provide information, which includes their contact information, the location where the birds are kept, as well as information regarding the species, quantity, and purpose of the birds.

“These proposals will enable us to have a full picture of the number and location of birds kept across Great Britain and make it easier to track and manage the spread of avian disease,” according to a [joint statement](#) by the chief veterinary officers from England, Scotland, and Wales.

“This information will also help inform future risk assessments and maintain our commitment to continually building our extensive avian influenza research portfolio.”

“We welcome this consultation as a means of ensuring the GB poultry register is fit to support Government and industry efforts in mitigating the ongoing impacts of avian influenza,” said British Poultry Council Chief Executive.

“Registering your poultry is an effective way of monitoring and controlling the spread of disease to protect the national flock. We, as ever, urge all poultry keepers to remain vigilant for signs of avian influenza in their birds.”

More from the UK government:

By registering their birds with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), keepers will ensure they receive important updates such as any local avian influenza outbreaks and information on biosecurity rules to help protect their flocks from the threat of avian influenza.

This will enable the government to communicate with bird keepers quickly, to manage potential disease outbreaks, such as avian influenza, and limit the spread.

The new rules would cover owners of backyard flocks, birds of prey and pigeon fanciers, but would not affect pet birds kept entirely inside a domestic dwelling, such as a parrot or budgie kept in a cage indoors which never leaves the property other than to visit a vet or another short-term period.

by Jim Hoft

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