

Fri 14 Oct 2005

## Turkish officials test nine people for bird flu

BRENDAN O'BRIEN

Nine people have been put under medical observation by Turkish officials after reports that 40 pigeons in their neighbourhood died mysteriously. Turkish officials have also confirmed that avian influenza caused the deaths of 1,800 turkeys on a farm in the northwest of the country.

The nine people, from the province of Manisa, were taken for observation after a man reported the deaths of 40 pigeons during the last two weeks, according to a Turkish news agency. Manisa neighbours the province where the outbreak of avian flu was detected. Samples from the dead pigeons have been taken to a laboratory in Izmir for analysis.

Osman Ozturk, deputy head of the Manisa health department, said: "there is no sign of illness in the nine people" under observation and added that they had been put under surveillance as a precaution while their homes were disinfected.

Bird flu was detected after 1,800 birds died on a turkey farm in Kiziksa, a village 80 miles southwest of Istanbul, this week. The European Union confirmed that the turkeys were killed by the H5N1 strain of avian influenza. Authorities say that the strain poses a small risk of mutating into a form that humans could contract more easily and causing a pandemic.

Veterinary officials are reported to have culled 8,600 birds in the area surrounding the village and have promised to cull all birds within a two-mile radius of the outbreak to stop the virus spreading to some 10 million chickens on farms in the region. Agriculture ministry official Beytullah Okay also said that Turkey would stop the selling of poultry on the open market and ban the hunting of birds nationwide.

Turkish authorities believe that birds migrating through the Manyas Bird Sanctuary near Kiziksa infected poultry on the village farm. Turkey is on the migration route for birds travelling between Asia and Africa.

Birds on the Dunabe delta in Romania are also suspected to have died from contracting a strain of the avian influenza virus. Testing on samples from the dead birds taken to England has been delayed for twenty-four hours. The European Union has pledged to give financial support to Romania to help fight any outbreak of avian flu.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has appealed for calm over fears of a possible spread of the virus to humans.

Dick Thompson, WHO spokesman, said: "[Bird flu is] a very difficult disease to transmit from animals to humans. It does happen, but it happens very rarely. Direct contact with infected poultry or surfaces and objects contaminated by their droppings is considered the main route



perfect partners

> The new chat up line:

> Do you sign in here often

DATING.scotsman.com

of human infection. There is no evidence that properly cooked poultry or poultry products can be a source of infection."

The H5N1 strain of avian flu has infected 117 people in Asia over two years. Around 60 of those infected were killed by the virus. Most of those who have died are understood to have been poultry farmers who contracted the disease directly from the birds.

### Web links

- [Dept of Health - pandemic flu](http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/EmergencyPlanning/PandemicFlu/fs/en)  
<http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/EmergencyPlanning/PandemicFlu/fs/en>
- [WHO - Bird Flu fact sheet](http://www.who.int/csr/don/2004_01_15/en/)  
[http://www.who.int/csr/don/2004\\_01\\_15/en/](http://www.who.int/csr/don/2004_01_15/en/)

### Related topic

- [Bird flu](http://news.scotsman.com/topics.cfm?tid=161)  
<http://news.scotsman.com/topics.cfm?tid=161>

**This article:** <http://news.scotsman.com/topics.cfm?tid=161&id=2089172005>

**Last updated:** 14-Oct-05 13:14 GMT

---

Ads by Google

#### [Scotsman](#)

Save up to 30% on books! NZ online bookstore.  
[Fishpond.co.nz](http://fishpond.co.nz)

#### [A square inch of Scotland](#)

The ideal gift- a unique land deed to display your piece of Scotland  
[www.squareinchland.com](http://www.squareinchland.com)

#### [Glasgow](#)

10 000 Glasgow Free to Search & to advertise  
[nz.easyroommate.com](http://nz.easyroommate.com)

---