

1 Introduction

This Manual has been developed to help strengthen the capacity of Member States in implementing effective public health interventions to prevent and control the spread of Avian Influenza (AI) at source.

The Manual attempts to provide simple, yet valuable, public health related measures that will not only improve and enhance biosecurity at critical stages of the food supply chain (production, transportation, marketing and consumption), but also ensure that the potential transmission of Avian Influenza virus from animals to humans is considerably reduced.

Biosecurity includes the management of all biological and environmental health risks associated with food. In the context of this Manual, biosecurity consists of a set of management practices which, when followed, collectively reduces the potential for the transmission / spread of disease-causing organisms - such as the Avian Influenza virus - onto and between sites, animals and humans.

Effective implementation of these simple public health measures would mean that the concept of healthy food markets could be established in practice and that potential heavy loss of human lives could also be avoided.

This Manual is addressed specifically to people who handle poultry and its products, whether at its stages of production; transportation; handling and processing at live animal markets; or closer to homes, while preparing the food.

The document therefore, seeks to draw close the attention at those handling poultry and its by-products, all along the food supply chain. That includes, but is not restricted to, managers of poultry production units, transporters, marketplace managers, municipal authorities, health workers, food inspectors, veterinarians, vendors, food handlers and consumers.