

AVIAN INFECTIOUS LARYNGOTRACHEITIS REGULATION

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Belize

BELIZE:

**STATUTORY INSTRUMENT
NO. OF 2009**

REGULATIONS made by the Minister responsible for Agriculture, after consultation with the Authority, in exercise of the powers conferred upon him by section 86 of the Belize Agricultural Health Authority Act, Chapter 211 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000-2003, and all other powers thereunto him enabling.

(Gazetted, 2009).

Short title.

1. These Regulations may be cited as the
**BELIZE AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AUTHORITY (NEWCASTLE DISEASE)
REGULATIONS, 2009.**

Interpretation.

2. In these Regulations

- 2.1 Accredited Laboratory:** means a veterinary diagnostic laboratory authorized by the Belize Agricultural Health Authority to conduct avian disease diagnostics in accordance with OIE guidelines.
- 2.2 Accredited:** means any person or legal entity to whom BAHA delegates activities related to the prevention, control and eradication of poultry diseases.
- 2.3 Authorization or accreditation:** Measure by which the BAHA grants to a legal person or entity the possibility to conduct a specific activity which falls under its competency.
- 2.4 Avian Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT):** It is a viral infection that affects the respiratory tract of birds, caused by an alphaherpesvirus and which can result in losses in poultry productivity.
- 2.5 Backyard Poultry:** All domestic poultry that are used for the production of meat and eggs destined for consumption, the production of other commercial products, the production of game birds or the reproduction of all these categories of birds.
- 2.6 BAHA :** means the Belize Agricultural Health Authority.
- 2.7 Biosecurity:** means any sanitary measure designed to reduce the risk of introduction and/or transmission of poultry diseases into poultry establishments.
- 2.8 Cold chain:** Procedure which guarantees the correct refrigeration temperature of the products during their storage, transportation and administration, from the establishment where they are manufactured until they are utilized.
- 2.9 Commercial Poultry:** means poultry which are raised for trade purpose.

- 2.10 Compartment:** means an animal subpopulation contained in one or more establishment under a common biosecurity management system with an distinct health status with respect to a specific disease or specific diseases for which required surveillance, control and biosecurity measures have been applied for the purpose of international trade.
- 2.11 Compost:** means a mixture which generally contains poultry organic material which may be used as fertilizer.
- 2.12 Confirmed case:** Infected or diseased animals in which the presence of the ILT virus has been proven by a diagnostic technique approved by BAHA.
- 2.13 Contamination:** The presence or introduction into the environment of elements harmful to life of flora or fauna, or that degrades the quality of the environment.
- 2.14 Control phase:** Group of sanitary activities, necessary for the control and eradication of ILT, realized in a strategic and sequential manner.
- 2.15 Control zone:** A particular geographical area in which are applied sanitary measures which tend to reduce the incidence and prevalence of the ILT virus in a specific period.
- 2.16 Control:** means sanitary measures whose objective are to reduce the incidence and prevalence of a poultry disease in a specific geographic area.
- 2.17 Day old birds:** means birds aged not more than 72 hours after hatching.
- 2.18 Definitive quarantine:** Absolute restriction of the movement of birds, their products and by-products during a period not less than 63 days while the sanitary actions are taken for the elimination of the aetiological agent of the disease.
- 2.19 Destroyed animals:** Those animals which are killed in the control of the disease and whose carcasses are not authorized for human or animal consumption nor for industrial use, reason why they are removed through the indicated sanitary processes.
- 2.20 Diagnosis:** Study based on the joint analysis of history, clinical signs observed in the animal, as well as, serological tests, virus isolation and strain characterization which allows the confirmation or rejection of the suspicion of infection with the ND virus.
- 2.21 Diagnostic test:** Laboratory techniques used to confirm or rule-out the presence of ILT virus in a premise or zone.
- 2.22 Epidemiological Surveillance:** Systematic, ongoing collection, collation, and analysis of information related to animal health and the timely dissemination of information to those who need to know so that action can be taken.
- 2.23 Eradication zone:** A particular geographical area in which are applied sanitary measures which tend to eliminate the ILT virus or where epidemiological studies are conducted with the objective to prove the absence of this disease, when the slaughter methodology is applied at least for period of three months.
- 2.24 Eradication:** means the elimination of a pathogenic agent from a country or zone.
- 2.25 Free farm certificate:** Official document granted by BAHA to proprietors of poultry establishments registered in the Poultry Health Programme and who have complied with this Regulation.
- 2.26 Free zone or country:** It is considered that a zone or country is free of poultry disease when it is known that the disease has not been detected in the area for at least three years. This period can be reduced to six months after having slaughtered the

last affected animal for the countries that apply depopulation, whether associated with vaccination against the poultry disease or not.

2.27 ILT Incubation Period: It is considered to be 14 days, in conformity with international guidelines.

2.28 ILT: Avian Infectious Laryngotracheitis.

2.29 International or external quarantine: Application of restrictive measures to prevent the introduction of ND in national territory or even into a determined geographical region within countries.

2.30 Notification: Formal written or electronic communication to BAHA on the suspicion or existence of poultry disease, providing in a sufficient and necessary manner the relevant epidemiological data for its corresponding identification, localization and attention.

2.31 Official Diagnostic Laboratory: Diagnostic establishment of the BAHA that conducts the assays and analyses to determine the absence or presence of poultry disease.

2.32 Official Veterinarian: means a veterinarian authorized by BAHA to perform certain designated official tasks associated with animal health and/or public health.

2.33 OIE: means the World Organization for Animal Health.

2.34 Outbreak: means the occurrence of one or more cases of disease or an infection in an epidemiological unit.

2.35 Owner: Natural or judicial person responsible for the poultry production activity.

2.36 Poultry by-products: Understood as the excreta of poultry (broilers and hens)

2.37 Poultry Disease : means Avian Influenza, Avian Infectious Laryngotracheitis, Newcastle Disease, Pullorum or Fowl Typhoid.

2.38 Poultry Establishment: means farms, slaughtering plants, hatcheries, feed mills, processing plants and poultry litter outlets.

2.39 Poultry Farm: means establishment, where birds are raised for commercial purposes and includes layers, breeders, broilers, pet birds, and fighting cocks.

2.40 Poultry Litter: means the excrement of birds, pure or mixed with feed and other by-products accumulated during production.

2.41 Poultry : means all domesticated birds including backyard poultry, used for the production of meat or eggs for consumption, for the production of other commercial products, for restocking supply of game, for breeding these categories of birds, as well as fighting cocks, caged birds, song birds used for any purpose.

2.42 Precautionary quarantine: Restrictive measures in the movement of birds, products and by-products when the existence of the disease is suspected in one or many premises.

2.43 Prevention: means sanitary measures based on epidemiological studies with the objective of preventing the introduction, establishment and/or spread of poultry disease.

2.44 Programme: means Programme for the prevention, control and eradication of poultry diseases established with the appropriate legal, financial and human resources.

2.45 Proprietor: means the person or group of persons who owns and is responsible for the poultry establishment.

- 2.46 Region/Zone:** means a clearly defined part of a territory containing an animal subpopulation with a distinct health status with respect to a specific disease for which required surveillance, control and biosecurity measures have been applied for the purpose of international trade.
- 2.47 Report:** Presentation of an official document on the detection of poultry disease in a specified place and time.
- 2.48 Rest period:** means the period of 2 to 3 weeks when the barns are emptied and cleaning and disinfection are done.
- 2.49 Risk analysis:** designates the process which encompasses hazard identification, risk evaluation, risk management and risk communication.
- 2.50 Slaughtered animals:** Those birds which for the purpose of control of the disease do not have any restrictions for their use and consumption.
- 2.51 Solid waste:** means disposed of objects and materials resulting from human activities during the process of consumption, transformation and production of poultry that represents no human health risk.
- 2.52 Subpopulation:** designates a particular fraction of a population.
- 2.53 Suspect case:** Flock with clinical signs of respiratory disease, with or without positive serology to the screening test (ELISA) in which the presence of ILT virus has not been confirmed through a confirmatory antigen detection test.
- 2.54 Vaccinated animals:** Those animals in which a duly approved biological product is administered, with the purpose of immunization for the prevention, control and eradication of ILT.
- 2.55 Veterinary certificate:** Official document issued by BAHA or by approved or accredited or authorized persons or legal entities to confirm compliance with this Regulation.
- 2.56 Virus isolation:** Diagnostic test performed by an authorized veterinary diagnostic laboratory consisting of inoculation of samples obtained from birds into chicken embryos for the isolation and identification of the Newcastle Disease virus.

3. OBJECTIVE AND APPLICATION

3.1 Objective

The present Regulation has as its objective to establish the sanitary measures for the Prevention, control and eradication programme for Avian Infectious Laryngotracheitis.

3.2 Scope of Application

Compliance with this Regulation corresponds to every person, group of persons or legal entity who is dedicated to production, industrialization, commerce and services in the poultry industry.

3.3 Competent Authority

BAHA, through the Department of Animal Health, is the Competent Authority for the application of the present Regulation.

4 GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 4.1** The Programme forILT is designed to establish the technical measures for the prevention, control and eradication of the disease.
- 4.2** The planning and coordination of the programme for ILT, shall be a shared responsibility among BAHA, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Belize Poultry Association.
- 4.3** The programme for ILT shall be active and permanent.
- 4.4** BAHA may accredit or authorize private veterinarians and laboratories to conduct official activities of the programme for ILT.

5 PHASES OF THE PROGRAMME FOR THE PREVENTION, CONTROL AND ERADICATION OF NEWCASTLE DISEASE

5.1 Of the Programme

The Programme contemplates the phases of prevention, control and eradication as well as considers the following conditions which must meet the OIE guidelines.

- a) Have an ILT prevention, control and eradication Programme that complies with OIE and other international technical guidelines and these must be verified and evaluated for their confirmation.
- b) The national ILT prevention, control and eradication programme should have the legal support and manuals which allow its operation.
- c) The programme should have control and verification points for the movement of birds, their products and by-products.

5.2 Prevention phase

5.2.1 In this phase, the BAHA should guarantee that the poultry establishments meet the biosecurity measures established in the Belize Agricultural Health Authority (POULTRY ACTIVITY) Regulation.

5.2.2 In this phase, the Official Veterinary Services should guarantee that the farms of their countries meet the biosecurity measures of the technical directive to regulate regional poultry activity.

- 5.2.3** ILT should be notifiable in the country. The farm owners or their legal representatives as well as veterinarians and accredited or official laboratories are mandated to notify to the BAHA, immediately upon the presentation of any suspicion or positive laboratory result to this disease.

5.2.4 The sanitary measures to take before a confirmed case shall be according to those established in the disease protocol of each country.

5.2.5 The Avian Health Programme should have an information system that guarantees that the activities of census, epidemiological surveillance, diagnosis and control of the avian infectious laryngotracheitis are duly recorded, that they be easy to consult and can be used to strengthen the sanitary measures for the prevention, control and eradication of ILT.

5.2.6 The Poultry Health Programme of the country shall prepare a Training Plan.

5.2.6.1.1.1 The training plan shall have programmed activities, using all the methodology tools such as seminars, talks and simulations.

5.2.6.1.1.2 The users of the Training Plan shall be: the technical personnel of BAHA, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and the Belize Poultry Association.

5.2.2.2

5.2.3.2.1 For the purpose of prevention, control and eradication, the diagnosis must be conducted in official diagnostic laboratories or authorized laboratories.

5.2.3.2.2 The official laboratory tests for the diagnosis of ILT are those determined by BAHA and shall be in accordance with OIE guidelines.

5.2.3.2.3 The official diagnostic laboratory shall establish the method of sample referral to the international diagnostic reference laboratory.

5.2.3.1.1 The BAHA shall respond to notifications, and immediately conduct an epidemiological investigation.

5.2.3.1.2 The disease response measures applied shall be according to the findings and to the ILT Emergency Preparedness Plan.

5.2.3.2 Vaccination

Vaccination shall be conducted in accordance to OIE and other international guidelines and in conformity to the strategies of the national programme.

5.2.3.2.1 The BAHA shall authorize the administration of vaccine and may make it mandatory.

5.2.3.2.2 Only vaccines from laboratories authorized by the BAHA shall be used and whose purchase has been authorized through the issuance of import permits.

5.2.3.2.3 Each farm should have a precise record of the manufacturer, type, dates and route of administration of the Newcastle disease vaccines.

5.2.3.2.4 The BAHA may need to adopt a territorial strategy which would include restrictive measures and a series of adequate continuous controls which would allow determination of whether the virus is circulating or not in the vaccinated population and also the evaluation of the efficacy of the vaccination programme.

5.2.3.2.5 The Programme shall keep the registry of the poultry producers using ND vaccine as well as vaccine manufacturers and distributors, and the farms certified as free of the disease.

5.2.3.3 The Belize Poultry Health Programme shall have an information system that guarantees that the activities of census, epidemiological surveillance, diagnosis and control of the Newcastle Disease are duly recorded. These records shall be easy to consult.

5.2.3.4 Import control

5.2.3.4.1 Birds, their products and by-products that are desired to be introduced into the country should include in their documentation: an official international veterinary certificate that attests to their origin and place of shipment from a zone or country officially recognized by the veterinary services of the exporting country as free of ILT, for which the zone or country of origin and/or place of shipment of the poultry commodity, should request in writing their recognition as free. The exporting countries should comply with the harmonized regional requirements for the importation of birds, their products and by-products.

5.2.3.4.2 The BAHA shall conduct risk analyses for all avian species, their products and by-products.

5.2.3.4.3 The BAHA shall prepare the sanitary requirements according to the recommendations of the risk analysis. The preparation of the requirements should be a product of the risk evaluation conducted by the country to avoid the introduction of ILT into the country.

5.2.3.5 The BAHA shall prepare a protocol for ILT disease according to the sanitary status. The sanitary requirements should not constitute a sanitary barrier to trade and should be harmonized among the countries of the region.

5.2.3.6 The BAHA is the responsible authority to apply international quarantine measures. These consist of restrictive measures that are applied to prevent the introduction of ILT into national territory.

5.2.3.7 The Official Veterinary Services of the countries should guarantee, through the quarantine inspectors at the different ports of entry into the countries, that entry into the country is permitted only to birds, products and by-products that have been previously authorized, and meeting all sanitary requirements.

5.2.3.7.1 Entry into the country is permitted only to birds, products and by-products that have been previously authorized, and meet all sanitary requirements.

5.2.3.7.2 In the case of an interception of an importation of unauthorized birds, their products or by-products, these shall be returned to origin, put under retention pending investigation or confiscated and destroyed forthwith.

5.2.3.7.3 The National Poultry Health Programme shall have a communication plan that includes activities of mass dissemination.

5.2.3.7.3.1 The public awareness campaign shall be designed with clear messages for the particular sector, assigning the necessary resources to guarantee its function.

5.2.3.7.3.2 The material for dissemination should be prepared according to the target audience; these should be addressed to travelers, official and

private technical personnel, poultry producers, backyard poultry owners, poultry merchants and the public in general.

6. CONTROL PHASE

6.1 In this phase, the BAHA should guarantee that the poultry establishments meet the biosecurity measures established in the Belize Agricultural Health Authority (POULTRY ACTIVITY) Regulation.

6.2 In free zones or zones/compartments where ND is an exotic disease or has been totally eradicated since its last apparition, the disease response measure shall be the depopulation of all infected and susceptible birds in the areas determined by the BAHA.

6.2.1 Internal quarantine.- The purpose of this type of quarantine is to avoid the possible transmission of ND to other susceptible birds not directly exposed, within an installation, a zone or region, or among these.

6.2.1.1 It should be applied in the case of a case or outbreak confirmed by isolation of the ND virus. Such quarantine refers to the restriction of movement of suspect and sick birds and those apparently healthy but exposed to the disease, as well as their products and by-products that have been or not been in direct contact with infected birds.

6.2.1.2 All the birds that are under the scheme of the ND programme, as well as reservoirs and any material potentially capable of transmitting the virus, should be subject to conditional or total quarantine, such that for its movement it should comply with the specifications in the present Regulation

6.2.1.3 The BAHA shall determine the disease response measure when an outbreak occurs in a control zone.

6.2.1.4 For the application of quarantine measures, the geographic area where the presence of the ND virus has been confirmed, including the regions of its influence, shall be considered as an infected area.

6.2.1.5 In infected areas, BAHA shall determine and identify the focal and peri-focal area; these areas shall be delimited through the installation of control points, specific for the movement of birds, their products and by-products.

6.2.1.6 The BAHA shall officially inform the establishment of quarantine measures to all stakeholders in the affected areas.

6.2.1.7 Once the poultry farm is empty, cleaning, washing and disinfection shall be done under the requirements established by the Programme for each case and under the supervision of an official veterinarian or veterinarian authorized by the BAHA.

6.2.1.8 Quarantine shall be lifted once the BAHA verifies the absence of ND or the activities of vaccination and certification have been complied with. Stakeholders shall be duly informed that the quarantine has been lifted.

6.3 Vaccination: In endemic zones, only lyophilized and/or emulsified vaccines, produced from lentogenic strains, shall be allowed.

The elimination of birds shall be done according to the ND emergency plan.

6.4 Zoning: BAHA may apply zoning for the effects of international trade with the purpose of defining poultry subpopulations of different sanitary status.

6.4.1 To define the zones the BAHA shall use geographic criteria for the definition of a subpopulation.

6.4.2 The surveillance and control measures that are required to preserve the sanitary status of a zone shall be the same as country free status

6.4.3 BAHA shall determine the extensions and limits of a zone based on natural, artificial or legal borders and shall disseminate this information by official means.

6.4.4 The birds and farms that form part of a subpopulation should be easily recognizable. The measures adopted should be documented in detail to identify the subpopulation and to guarantee the recognition and maintenance of its sanitary status.

6.5 Epidemiological surveillance

Epidemiological surveillance following a statistical sampling design shall be based on a passive part where suspect cases are investigated and an active part that is conducted every 4 months in export poultry establishments including poultry farms, and at least once a year in backyard poultry.

1.1 CONTROL PHASE

1.1.1 In this phase, the Official Veterinary Services should guarantee that the farms in their countries comply with the biosecurity measures established in the **TECHNICAL DIRECTIVE TO REGULATE REGIONAL POULTRY ACTIVITY**

1.1.2 In countries where ILT is an exotic disease or has been totally eradicated from the country since its last apparition, the sanitary measure to take should be movement control, whose only final destination be the processing plant. The by-products should be subjected to a elevated temperature treatment that guarantees the destruction of the virus and its trade could be conducted under the required movement control.

1.1.3 Quarantine of premises with confirmed cases: The purpose of this type of quarantine is to avoid the possible transmission of ILT to other susceptible birds directly or not directly exposed. It should be applied in the event of a case or outbreak confirmed by PCR analysis or ILT virus isolation. Such quarantine refers to the movement control of birds, products and by-products of said enterprise.

1.1.3.1 All premises in which a case of ILT is confirmed should be subject to quarantine under the guidelines issued by the official Veterinary Services.

1.1.3.2 The establishment of the quarantine measures should be officially notified to the affected areas by the Official Veterinary Services.

1.1.3.3 Once the poultry farm is empty, cleaning, washing and disinfection shall be done under the requirements established by the Programme for each case and under the supervision of an official veterinarian or responsible veterinarian authorized by the Official Veterinary Services.

1.1.3.4 The lifting of quarantine shall be subject to the criteria of the official veterinary Services of each country.

1.1.4 **Vaccination:** The use of vaccine shall depend on the rapidity with which the disease is detected and diagnosed, as well as the risk that the dissemination of the disease represents among the industrial poultry population.

For immunization against ILT there is available two live vaccines that differ initially in the origin of the culture from which the vaccine virus proceeds: from cell culture (LT-Ivax) and from chicken embryo (all the rest). Besides, a recombinant vaccine with fowl pox virus and another with Marek's virus is in the market.

1.1.4.1 Under these conditions, the official veterinary services shall authorize the administration of vaccine. The vaccine must demonstrate its efficiency and efficacy for the prevention and control of this disease. To allow the use of the vaccines, only vaccines from laboratories authorized by the official veterinary services should be used and whose purchase has been authorized to import businesses by the official veterinary services. The production of the vaccines shall be based on the protocols according to the OIE guidelines.

1.1.4.2 The Programme shall keep the registry of the poultry producers using the vaccine as well as the manufacturing laboratories and distributor businesses and the farms certified as free of the disease. For certification of farms free of ILT, the only vaccines authorized by the official veterinary services shall be recombinant vaccines.

1.1.4.3 The vaccines should be handled through adequate use of the cold chain.

1.1.5 Elimination of birds: It shall be done according to the ILT emergency plan established by the official veterinary services.

1.1.6 The premises that are subject to control should be easily recognizable. In these premises each flock must be identified and the measures adopted for the recognition of the sanitary status of each one must be documented in detail.

1.1.7 **Training:** They should have a continuous training plan which contemplates realizing ILT related seminars and talks.

The training plan shall be directed to official and private technical personnel, poultry producers, backyard poultry owners, poultry merchants and all those involved directly or indirectly with the poultry sector.

- 1.1.8 **Public Awareness campaign:** The design, preparation and distribution of stickers, informational and educational material, highway billboards, radio spots directed to different sectors, according to their educational level to maintain the alert between the poultry owners in the rural and urban and to invite them to notify abnormalities observed in domestic poultry.

1.2 CONTROL AND ELIMINATION OF OUTBREAKS

- 1.2.1 In the event of detection of a case or outbreak of ILT in a poultry enterprise, the following should be undertaken:
- a) Quarantine of the affected poultry enterprise, according to time and place determined by the official veterinary services.
 - b) The official veterinary services shall evaluate the measures to be applied in the affected poultry farms, that allow the elimination of the sanitary problem such as type of quarantine to apply, vaccination and/or slaughter at the slaughter plant, area of burial and/or incineration or disposal of cadavers, carcasses, products and by-products of poultry origin or commercialization of poultry products and by-products and repopulation, among others.
 - c) Identify during the outbreak, the number of cases, animals vaccinated, slaughtered and destroyed, until its closure.
 - d) Cleaning, washing and disinfection of installations, according to what is established for each case by the Programme. Compliance with this process should be supervised by an official veterinarian.
 - e) Inactivation of the organic and inorganic wastes of the enterprise, according to what is established for each case by the official veterinary services.
 - f) In such an evaluation, consideration shall be given to the magnitude of the outbreak, epidemiological situation, susceptible poultry population, trade channels, type of products produced, emergency animal health task force, infrastructure for diagnosis and control of movement of birds, products, by-products and implements and equipment used in poultry production, among others.
- 1.2.2 In conformity with the legislation of each country, the official veterinary services shall establish the compensation mechanisms that it considers necessary.

1.3 ERADICATION PHASE

5.4.1 Emergency plan: the programmes should have the emergency plan written and updated so as to apply it in this phase in the eventuality that new cases present.

5.4.2 Emergency task force: An emergency task force should be established duly trained to implement the emergency plan for which they shall have the availability of equipment, supplies and materials.

5.4.3 The Avian Health Programmes of the countries should have identified in their emergency plans all the materials, equipment and supplies necessary for the control of a disease outbreak. Also, all the logistics for their use in the control of an outbreak should be guaranteed.

5.5 FREE PHASE

5.5.1 The country is considered free when it is ascertained that the disease has not been present for at least the last 12 months.

5.5.2 The affected premise can recover its ILT free sanitary condition, after having executed the prescribed quarantine, conducted the actions of cleaning and disinfection of the premise during the sanitary rest period, and the new batch housed in the premises present negative results to active surveillance, upon finalizing three incubation periods of the ILT virus.

2. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE

2.1 Epidemiologic surveillance is based in an passive part where suspect cases notified to the official veterinary services are investigated and another active part which is conducted in poultry premises for exportation, which require certification as free (with or without recombinant vaccine) for the commercialization of live birds and hatching eggs. The flocks of these premises shall be monitored for ILT diagnostics, three (3) times during the lifespan of the birds, one during the development stage and two in the production stage at the following ages: between 8 to 12 weeks, 25 to 45 weeks and 46 to 65 weeks.

2.2 ILT should be notifiable in the country. The farm owners or their legal representatives as well as veterinarians and accredited or official laboratories are mandated to notify to the veterinary services of the countries, immediately upon the presentation of any suspicion or positive laboratory result to this disease.

2.3 The selection of the sample size shall be based in a epidemiological design, statistically founded, with a confidence level of 95% and an expected prevalence of 10% in each premise.

2.3.1 For epidemiological surveillance (active surveillance) the ELISA test shall be used as a screening test. Birds whose sera are reactors to the serological test, should have some of the following antigen detection tests conducted for its confirmation: the polymerase chain reaction test (PCR), immunofluorescence (IF), immunoperoxidase (IP) or virus isolation, according to the possibilities in each country. A maximum of 5 birds per pool shall be allowed for the PCR test.

2.3.2 For the purpose of diagnosis of this disease, it must be conducted in official diagnostic laboratories or laboratories authorized by the Official veterinary Services.

2.3.3 The official laboratories or laboratories authorized by the official veterinary services are mandated to immediately notify the Ministry/Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock when antigen is detected through the recommended confirmatory tests.

