

# Final Report for the 2014–2015 Outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in the United States



USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service  
Veterinary Services

# Nature of Disease

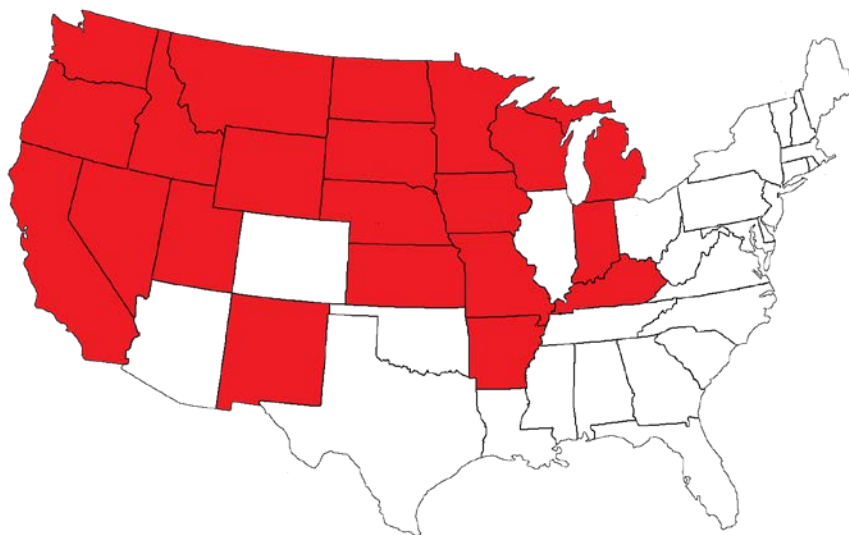
- Avian influenza (AI) is a viral respiratory disease that infects all avian species.
  - AI is a common disease, but it frequently changes.
- Based on the severity of illness, the disease is classified as either HPAI or low pathogenicity avian influenza (LPAI).
- AI viruses are named by two groups of proteins:
  - hemagglutinin ([HA] ranging from H1–H17), and
  - neuraminidase (ranging from N1–N9), e.g., H5N2 or H5N8.

# Incident Overview

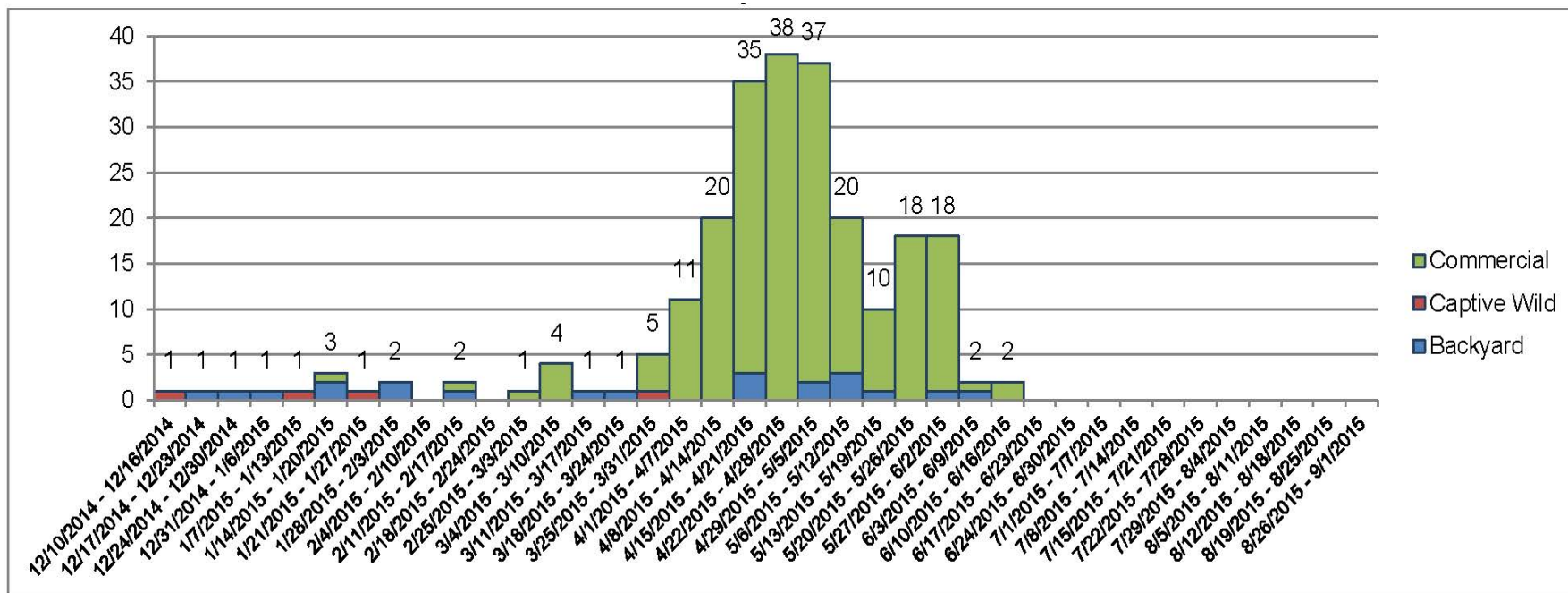
- **December 2014:** HPAI detected in the United States
  - First time in 10 years.
- **December 11, 2014–January 16, 2015:** USDA received a total of 7 reports of HPAI H5N2 or H5N8 in captive wild birds and backyard flocks from the NW U.S.
  - Additional detections occurred in wild birds.
- **January 23, 2015:** 1<sup>st</sup> infected commercial flock identified in CA.
- **January–March 2015:** HPAI spread slowly to multiple states
  - MN, MO, AR, and KS.
- **April:** Significant increase in HPAI H5N2 in turkey flocks occurred through early April in MN, followed by a rapid increase in IA in late April and May where large numbers of chicken layer flocks were affected.
- **June 16, 2015:** Last case of HPAI confirmed in commercial birds.

# Numbers Overview

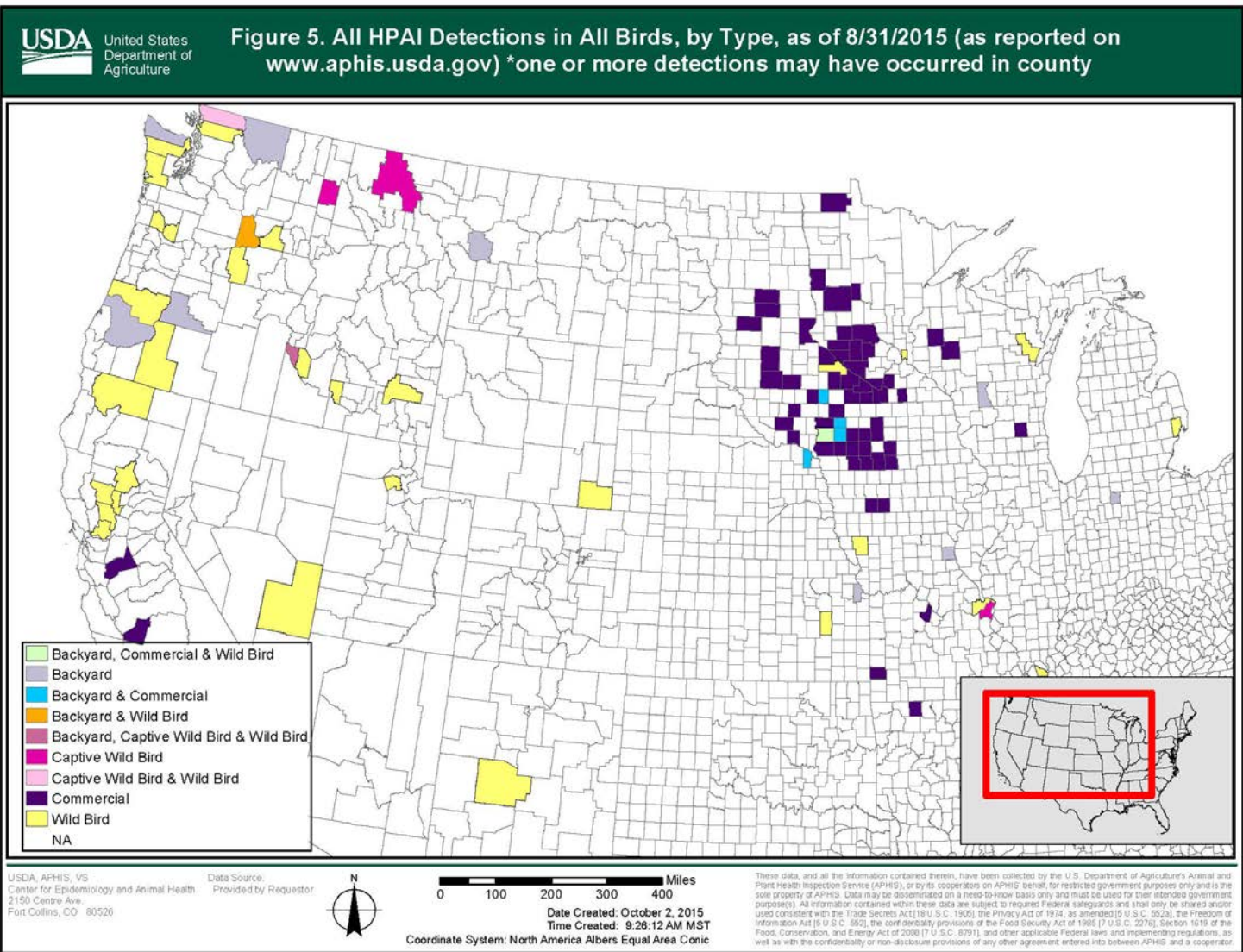
- **211** detections on commercial operations and **21** detections on backyard premises
  - including premises designated as a Dangerous Contact (DC) Premises.
- ~7.4 million turkeys and 43 million egg-layers and pullet chickens were affected by HPAI and died from the disease or were depopulated.
- Outbreak was the largest HPAI outbreak ever recorded in the U.S. arguably the most significant animal health event in U.S. history.
- HPAI in 21 States (includes all HPAI detections in any bird type, including wild birds):



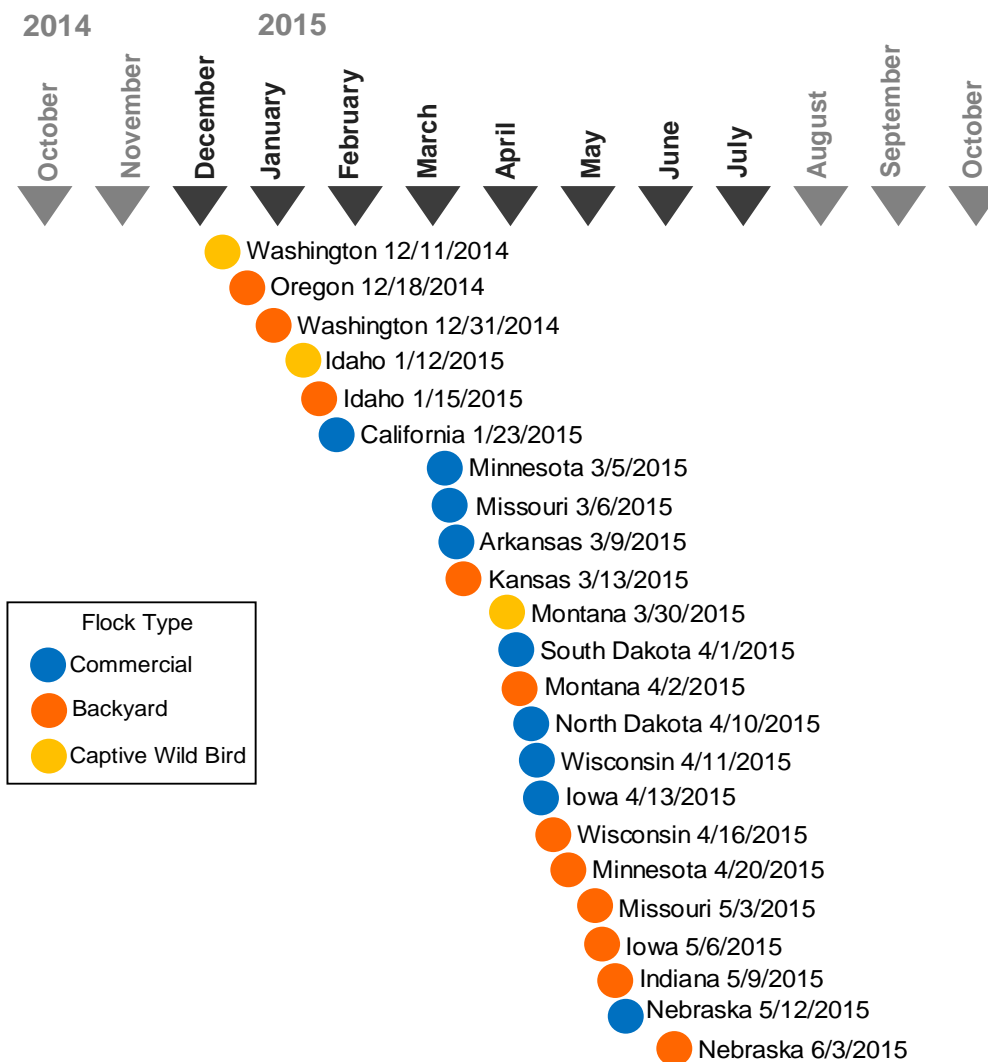
# Total Incidence of HPAI in the United States by Week



# HPAI Detections in the United States



# First Detection by Flock Type in each State by National Veterinary Services Laboratories Confirmation Date



# Approximate Percentage of U.S. Poultry Affected

The losses in commercial inventories for layer chickens, pullets, and turkeys were substantial. This was the most significant HPAI outbreak in U.S. history.

Flock Type <sup>a</sup>	Percent Losses
Layer Chickens <sup>b</sup>	10.01% avg. U.S. inventory
Pullet Chickens	6.33% avg. U.S. inventory
Broiler Chickens	<0.01% avg. U.S. inventory
Turkeys	3.16% annual production; 7.46% avg. U.S inventory

<sup>a</sup> Flocks identified as "mixed poultry" were not included in bird counts.

<sup>b</sup> This includes flocks that were identified as "chickens" and or "layer breeder."



# Transmission

- Sharing equipment between farms, entry of wild birds into barns, and farm workers/visitors all likely contributed to virus spread.
  - Other possible pathways included short-distance aerosol spread, carcass disposal techniques, and other biosecurity breaches.
- Results indicated that HPAI can be aerosolized from infected flocks.
  - While possible that aerosol transmission was responsible for disease spread, the USDA APHIS Epidemiological Analysis was “not able to determine with certainty whether aerosol transmission was responsible for a farm becoming infected.”

USDA APHIS CEAH. (2015). *Epidemiologic and Other Analyses of HPAI-Affected Poultry Flocks: September 9, 2015* available at

[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/animal\\_dis\\_spec/poultry/downloads/Epidemiologic-Analysis-Sept-2015.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_dis_spec/poultry/downloads/Epidemiologic-Analysis-Sept-2015.pdf).

# Organizational Response

- In December 2014, an Incident Coordination Group (ICG) was established and VS personnel deployed to the first HPAI case.
- The ICG was scaled up significantly in April to reflect the increasing number of detections and broadening response requirements.
- VS Incident Management Teams (IMTs) were deployed from December 2014 to August 2015.
  - Outbreak resulted in a new VS IMT—Indigo.
- Over the course of the outbreak, there were over 1,200 deployments by APHIS personnel.
  - APHIS was on Mobility Level 2; VS initiated mandatory deployments.
  - The number of APHIS responders and contractors continued to increase as the outbreak grew.
  - There were deployments from all APHIS programs.

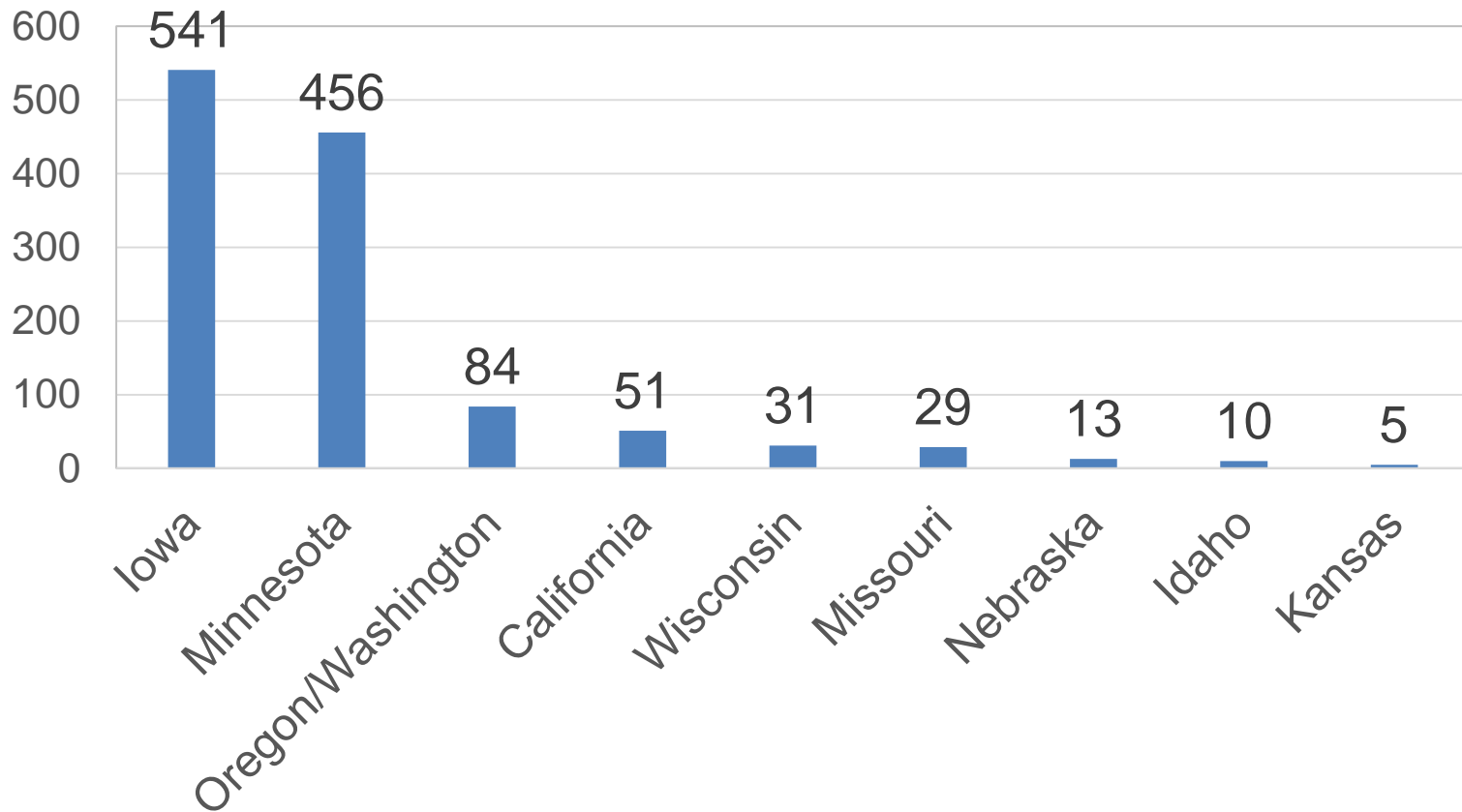
# Incident Management Structures and Key Events during the 2014–2015 Outbreak

December 2014	January 2015	February 2015	March 2015	April 2015	May 2015	June 2015
<p><b>Dec 14</b> HPAI first detected in the United States</p> <p><b>Dec 19</b> - First backyard flock tests positive for HPAI - National ICG established</p> <p><b>Dec 24</b> First personnel deployed to the field</p>	<p><i>EMLC engaged</i></p> <p><b>Jan 23</b> HPAI confirmed in a commercial flock in California</p>		<p><b>Dec 24</b> First detection in Minnesota</p>	<p><b>Apr 13</b> First detection in Iowa</p> <p><b>Apr 22–28</b> Week with the most new cases (38)</p>	<p><i>Green IMT split into 2 teams</i></p>	<p><i>Blue IMT split into 2 teams</i></p> <p><b>Jun 17</b> Last HPAI-confirmed premises</p> <p><b>Jun 23</b> APHIS MAC replaces the EMLC</p>

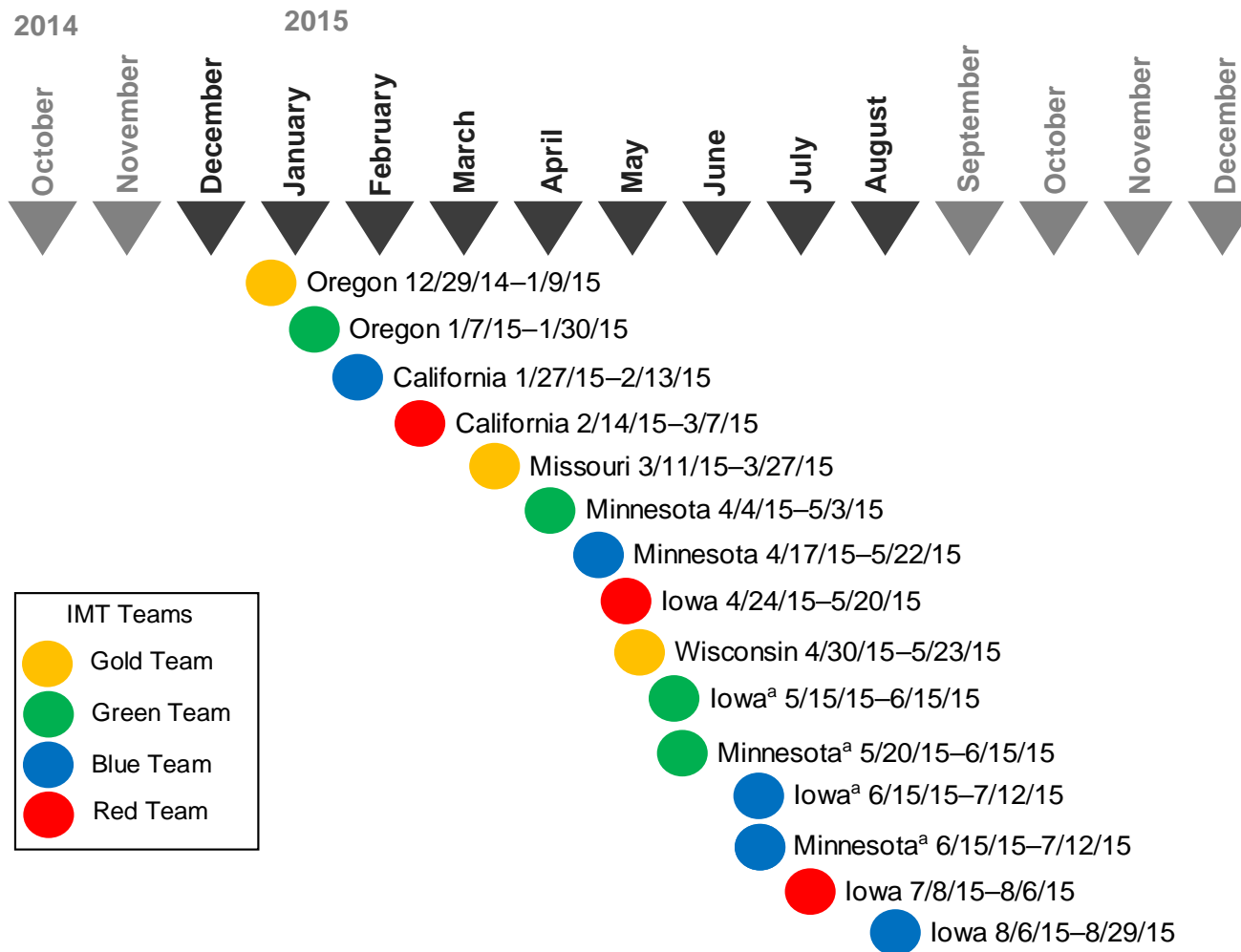
# Personnel

- At the height of response operations in June 2015, more than 3,400 personnel were deployed:
  - About 250 APHIS personnel, 180 State responders, and over 3,000 support contractors.
- Over the course of the entire outbreak, there were 1,220 deployments by APHIS personnel, with 773 total individuals deployed.
  - After training, 69 National Animal Health Response Corps (NAHERC) members deployed during the outbreak.
- Many APHIS personnel deployed twice, and some deployed 3–4 times.
- ~300 additional employees worked virtually or at an APHIS headquarters location as part of the ICG.

# Total Number of APHIS Personnel Deployed by State of Incident



# APHIS VS Incident Management Team Rotation

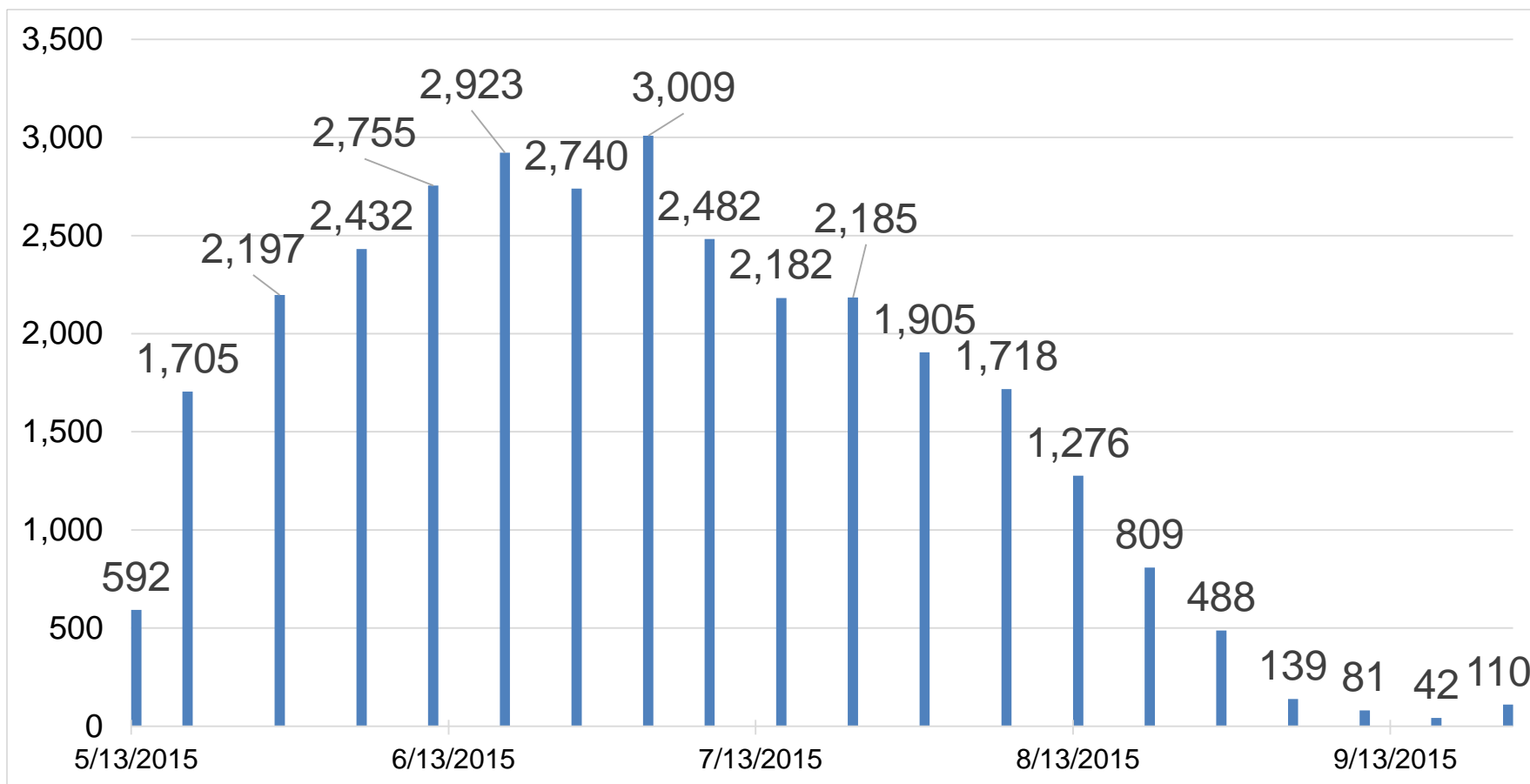


<sup>a</sup> Teams split and augmented with contractors due to the scope of the incident.

# Contractors

- The response to the outbreak quickly outpaced available resources once the outbreak accelerated in the Midwest, both at the ICG and IMT levels.
- Contractors augmented both ICG and field responses.
  - USDA APHIS contracted with a number of companies, large and small, to effectively execute response operations.
  - Contractors worked in the field not only to provide services and materials related to depopulation, disposal, and disinfection, companies premises physical security services, credentialing assistance, and equipment rentals.
  - More than 90 companies, individuals, and organizations were contracted to complete response operations successfully.

# Number of Contractors Deployed during Outbreak





# Logistics Overview

- The SPRS Logistics Center and the NVS led logistics for the 2014–2015 HPAI outbreak at the ICG-level, and also deployed personnel to support the APHIS VS IMTs as required by the incident.
- The SPRS Logistics Center and NVS were responsible for contracting support for response activities.
  - Contractor support peaked in June, when over 3,000 personnel in the field were responding to the incident.
- First activated on December 19, 2014, the NVS had over 2,700 requests for supplies through June 2015.
  - At a cost of over \$2.9 million.
  - Transportation costs, including for extraordinary rapid transit of diagnostic samples, totaled approximately \$350,000.

# Overview of Response Activities

- Depopulation, disposal, and virus elimination activities all posed significant challenges due to the number of affected premises and birds.
  - Foaming was the most common method of depopulation for turkeys; CO<sub>2</sub> in chicken layers,
  - Composting the most common method of disposal, and
  - Wet disinfectant the most common mode of virus elimination.
- On average, it took commercial premises 111 days from NVSL disease confirmation to get restock approval.
  - 104 days from completion of depopulation to restock approval.



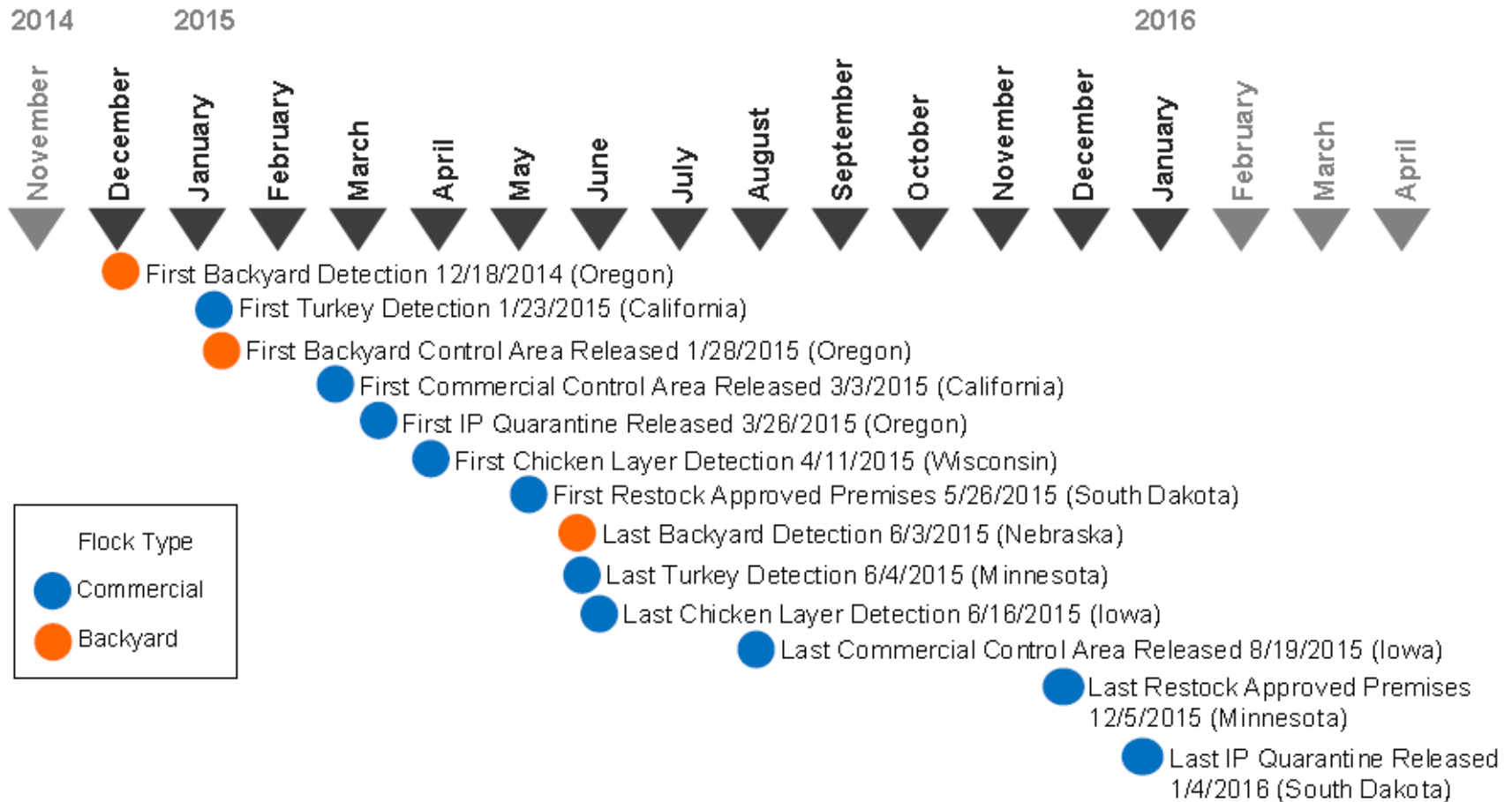
# Appraisal and Compensation Overview

- Over \$650 million was paid for response activities on Infected Premises.
- In total, 232 appraisals and 44 trace outs were completed, with approximately \$200 million paid for indemnity (approximately 24% of total funds expended for response).
- Indemnity processes were cumbersome and led to delays.
  - New indemnity processes have been streamlined and simplified.
- Cooperative Compliance Agreements were used as the mechanism to compensate producers for work they performed on their premises—such as disposal and virus elimination procedures.
  - Lessons learned from this experience resulted in new appraisal and compensation processes, that eliminated the use of these agreements.

# End of Outbreak and Cost

- Although outbreak ended in mid-June 2015, many response operations (e.g., cleaning and disinfection, environmental sampling, and restocking) continued throughout the fall.
- As of November 18, 2015, the United States sent a final report to the World Organization for Animal Health (the OIE).
  - At that time, the 2014–2015 outbreak in the United States was considered closed.
- Extensive planning and preparation efforts continued for the possible reemergence of HPAI in the fall of 2015 and spring of 2016.
- For the 2014–2015 outbreak, over \$850 million was paid out for response activities, indemnity payments, and direct support personnel for the response.
- Further funds were spent on preparedness activities: **it was the most expensive animal health incident recorded in U.S. history.**

# Summary of Key Events during the 2014–2015 HPAI Outbreak



# Economic and Trade Impact

- Estimates suggest the 2014–2015 HPAI incident resulted in approximately \$1.6 billion in direct losses from turkeys and egg-laying hens that had to be euthanized.
- When accounting for factors like restocking and lost future production, the impact to the U.S. economy is thought to be closer to \$3.3 billion.
- As a result, consumers experienced wholesale egg prices reaching nearly \$2.80 per dozen, more than doubling the previous 3-year average cost of large eggs.
  - Prices continually decreased throughout the remainder of 2015, but costs sustained above the 3-year average.

# List of Policies & Guidance

For example, the following policies and guidance were provided during the 2014–2015 HPAI outbreak (in alphabetical order):

- [Control Area Release](#)
- Financing the Response: State/Tribal Information
- [General Resources and Information](#)
- [H5/H7 Avian Influenza Case Definition](#)
- HPAI in the Live Bird Marketing System
- HPAI Response Goals
- [HPAI Zones and Premises](#)
- [Indemnity Procedures](#)
- Landfill Disposal Guidance—Recommended Waste Acceptance Practices for Landfills
- Mortality Composting Protocol for AI Infected Flocks
- [New](#) State Checklist
- Post C&D Environmental Sampling Guide
- PPE Recommendations for HPAI Responders
- [Processing Indemnity Payments](#)
- [Restocking Criteria for Previously Infected Premises](#)
- Stamping Out and Depopulation Policy
- [Surveillance Activities around HPAI Infected Backyard Flocks](#)
- [Surveillance Sampling for Commercial Premises in Control Area](#)
- Testing Requirements for Movement from the Control Area
- [Timeline to Restocking and Environmental Sampling Procedures](#)
- Use of the Antigen Capture Immunoassay
- Using Heat Treatment for Virus Elimination
- Ventilation Shutdown Evidence and Policy.

# Lessons Learned

- Depopulation needed to occur more rapidly to stop the amplification of virus and ongoing HPAI transmission.
- Financial processes were cumbersome and time consuming.
- Biosecurity measures must be improved on premises to not only stop HPAI transmission during an outbreak, but prevent HPAI introductions into commercial poultry flocks in the future.





# Policy Updates

- Policy guidance documents on issues like ventilation shutdown, heat treatment for virus elimination, and financial processes were developed and released to address the issues that occurred during the response to the incident.
- New biosecurity guidance was developed collaboratively by the industry, State, and Federal officials for implementation by producers.

# List of Appendices to the Final Report

- Appendix 1. Abbreviations for the Appendices
- Appendix 2a. Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Outbreak Weekly Situation Report (June 11, 2015)
- Appendix 2b. Final Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Outbreak Weekly Situation Report (December 18, 2015)
- Appendix 3. Infected Premises from 2014–2015 Outbreak
- Appendix 4. Mapbook Weekly Report (August 31, 2015)
- Appendix 5a. National Control and Containment Map (June 25, 2015)
- Appendix 5b. Final National Control and Containment Map (November 19, 2015)
- Appendix 6. Epidemiological Curve (September 1, 2015)
- Appendix 7. Summary Deployment Report (October 8, 2015)
- Appendix 8. Permitting and Movement Report (September 8, 2015)
- Appendix 9a. APHIS Incident Coordination Group Incident Action Plan (June 15, 2015)
- Appendix 9b. Final APHIS Incident Coordination Group Incident Action Plan and Completed Assignments (September 9, 2015)
- Appendix 10. Minnesota HPAI 2015 Incident—SitRep #64 (June 12, 2015)