



REMOVAL OF POULTRY AT PULAU UBIN

1 To reduce the risk of bird flu affecting Singapore, the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority (AVA) will remove poultry from farms and residences in Pulau Ubin by Friday, 6 February 2004. AVA is taking this precautionary measure to safeguard public health.

2 The poultry kept by the farms and residents in Pulau Ubin are at risk of contracting bird flu. Of the 9 licensed farms in Pulau Ubin, 4 are farming poultry, comprising chickens, ducks and geese. These small backyard farms do not have proper biosecurity measures in place. The residents at Pulau Ubin are also keeping poultry under free-range conditions. There is thus a risk of the birds becoming infected with bird flu through contact with infected wild birds. AVA has assessed that it is not possible for the residents and farms to put in place the necessary biosecurity measures in the short term.

3 AVA had earlier offered to buy the poultry from the farms and residents. The Poultry Merchants' Association has also expressed interest in purchasing the poultry and will be meeting the farmers and residents of Pulau Ubin today (4 Feb 04) to buy their poultry. AVA will remove any remaining stock by 6 Feb 04. The farming of poultry at Pulau Ubin will be prohibited until further notice.

4 Farms and residents will be allowed to keep a few of their existing poultry as pets but they will have to be caged. Residents will also be allowed to keep their other existing pet birds e.g. ornamental birds, songbirds.

5 We would like to reiterate that Singapore is currently free from bird flu, and the poultry population in Pulau Ubin is healthy and uninfected by bird flu.

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MEDIA RELEASE