

'Low risk' bird flu identified at British farm

February 2 2015

Tests have confirmed an outbreak of avian flu in chickens at a farm in southern England but officials described it as a "low severity" strain of the disease on Monday.

Britain's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) said there was no link with a separate outbreak of [bird flu](#) detected at a duck breeding farm in November.

The chickens at the farm in Hampshire are to be culled, and there is a one-kilometre ban on moving poultry around the farm.

"The advice from Public Health England is that the risk to public health is very low," Defra said in a statement.

Tests found the outbreak was the H7 [form](#) of [avian flu](#), described as less severe form of the H5N8 strain found at the duck [farm](#). The H5N8 virus has previously hit Europe, South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Canada and the United States.

"This is a low severity form of the virus and we are taking action to ensure that the disease does not spread or develop into a more severe form," said Britain's Chief Veterinary Officer Nigel Gibbens.

"We are investigating the possible sources of the outbreak."

Bird flu can be fatal for birds, and also poses a health threat to humans, who can become ill after handling infected poultry.

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