

AVIAN INFLUENZA (BIRD FLU)

An Emerging Threat

In recent years none other than "Avian Influenza" also called as "Bird flu" or "Avian flu" has attracted more attention of the scientists, academicians, journalists, politicians, poultry farmers, and general public alike. Facts of scientific information along with the myths spread with different explanations and illustrations. Nations are in a state of fear as the virus which cause the disease threatens to melt borders and spread the wings of death. The severity of the disease is such, to put into the words of Dr.Keiji Fukuda, Head influenza epidemiologist at U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention published in The Guardian on August 1999 that, "I've been involved in a number of investigations, but in terms of infectious diseases there are a very few comparable events to an influenza pandemic. Most infectious diseases have regional or local implications; even a really devastating disease like malaria is confined to warmer areas. There is probably no other disease like influenza that has the potential to infect a huge percentage of the world population inside the space of a year...I don't think anybody's prepared, I don't think even people in the field really have a good understanding of what it could be like".

A vast information is available on different sources especially websites, But comprehensive and up-to-date information needed by the scientist, veterinarian, public health person as well as general public including poultry farmers is found to be the need of the hour. Considering the necessity, we thought of bringing a text with comprehensive information which may assist local and national health authorities and other stakeholders who consider the needs for preparing for possible incursion of HPAI, to detect the disease at the earliest opportunity and to respond as rapidly as possible to control the disease.

This book was therefore conceived along the lines of the noted architect Mies Van der Rohe's dictum, "less is more". We have devised this text to present the bare essentials of avian flu in a palatable and interesting form that will enable most general reader to grasp the essence of the topics mentioned in the text.

The experience of the authors in tackling routine poultry diseases did enthuse to follow the track of the disease avian influenza through the globe vis-à-vis to Indian conditions, and delivering various lectures on the topic to people with varied backgrounds, the conversation made and the feedback obtained from them made the authors to ink for this book. The information is continuous but the basic concept of which is same and thus we are sure that the information in this book will definitely be useful and handy to the readers. The references given along with the websites makes the reader for updating the further information.

It is our hope that readers using this text will avoid that choking situation, so common in a topic of this sort and even conceive a curiosity about the topic that will lead to further study.



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