

2024 Avian Influenza A (H5N1)

Region 1 - Response

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CASE SCENARIO

3/2/23

- Report of neurologic skunk approximately 1 mile from recent HPAI wild bird die offs
- Skunk was not fearful of people, very active, but stumbling, circling and walking sideways

Four empty rounded rectangular boxes for notes, each preceded by a blue downward-pointing chevron icon.

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3/10/23

- Positive HPAI result

PRESS RELEASE

First case of contagious avian flu found in Texas



This is the first confirmed case of HPAI in mammals for Texas. (ky3)

By KCBD Staff

Published: Mar. 21, 2023 at 1:42 PM CDT |

Updated: 4 hours ago



CARSON COUNTY, Texas (NEWS RELEASE) - The National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) confirmed this week the presence of Highly

First Texas Case of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Detected in Mammals

March 21, 2023

Media Contact: [TPWD News](#), Business Hours, 512-389-8030

News Image Share on Facebook Share Release URL

Note: This item is more than four months old. Please take the publication date into consideration for any date references.

AUSTIN- The National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) confirmed this week the presence of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in a striped skunk recovered from Carson County.

This is the first confirmed case of HPAI in mammals for Texas.

Detected in all states across the U.S. except Hawaii, HPAI is a highly contagious virus that transmits easily among wild and domestic birds. The virus can spread directly between animals and indirectly through environmental contamination.

For mammals, current data shows transmission occurs primarily through the consumption of infected animal carcasses, though mammal-to-mammal transmission does not appear sustainable.

Other mammal species susceptible to HPAI include foxes, raccoons, bobcats, opossums, mountain lions and black bears. Symptoms can include ataxia (incoordination, stumbling), tremors, seizures, lack of fear of people, lethargy, coughing and sneezing, or sudden death.

Because of the ease of transmission, TPWD recommends that wildlife rehabilitators also remain cautious when intaking wild animals with clinical signs consistent with HPAI and consider quarantining animals to limit the potential for HPAI exposures to other animals within the facility.

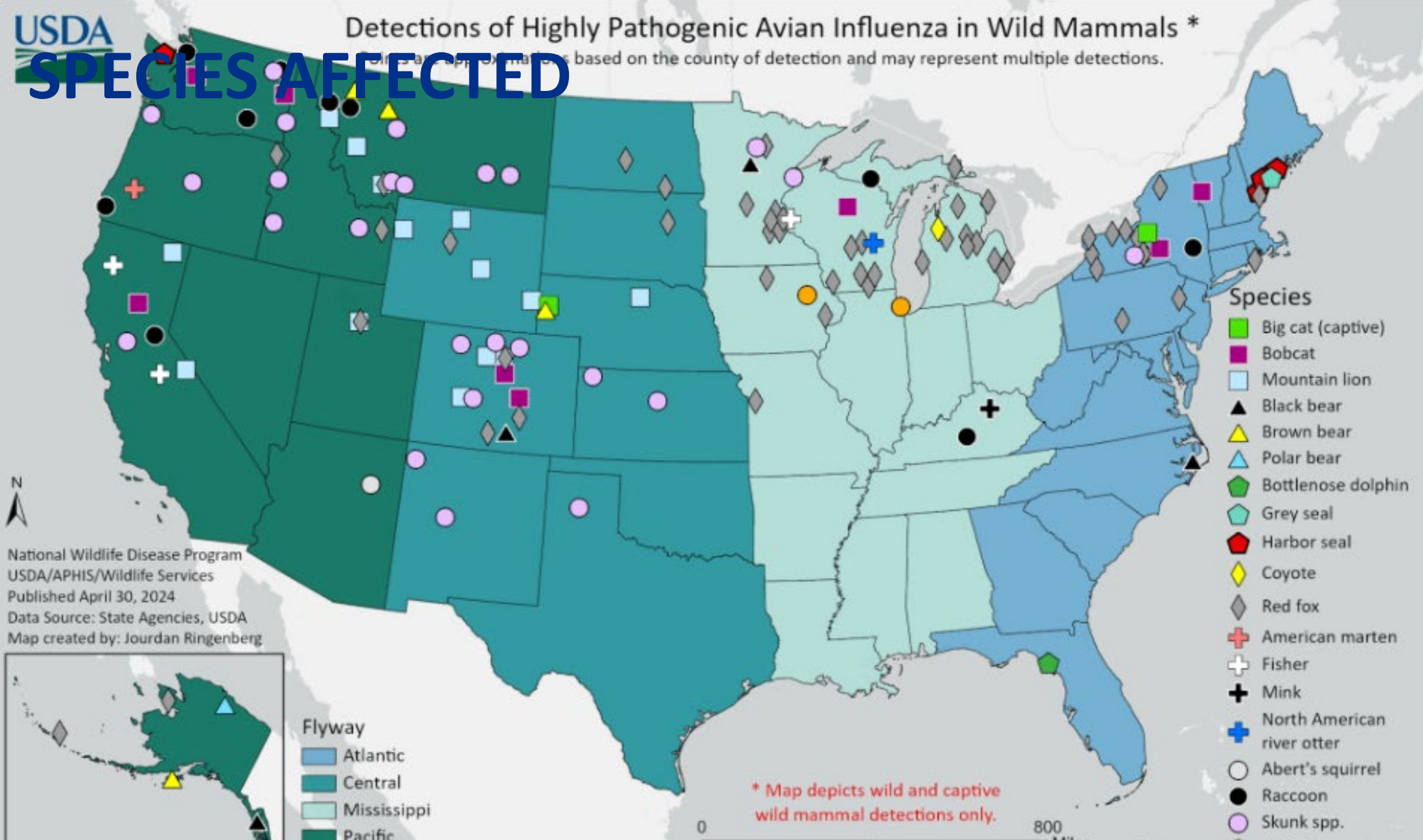
Currently, the transmission risk of avian influenza from infected birds to people remains low, but the public should take basic protective measures (i.e., wearing gloves, face masks and handwashing) if contact with wild animals cannot be avoided.

Those who locate wild animals with signs consistent with HPAI should immediately contact their local [TPWD wildlife biologist](#).

Detections of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Wild Mammals *

* Detection dates and approximate locations based on the county of detection and may represent multiple detections.

SPECIES AFFECTED



National Wildlife Disease Program
 USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services
 Published April 30, 2024
 Data Source: State Agencies, USDA
 Map created by: Jourdan Ringenberg

* Map depicts wild and captive wild mammal detections only.

0 800 Miles

Timeline of Response Activities

Mid-Feb: Unknown illness affects dairy cattle in the Texas Panhandle

3/7/24:
TAHC first notified of ill dairy herds in the panhandle



Regional Response Activities

- Zoonosis becomes aware of dairy cattle illness

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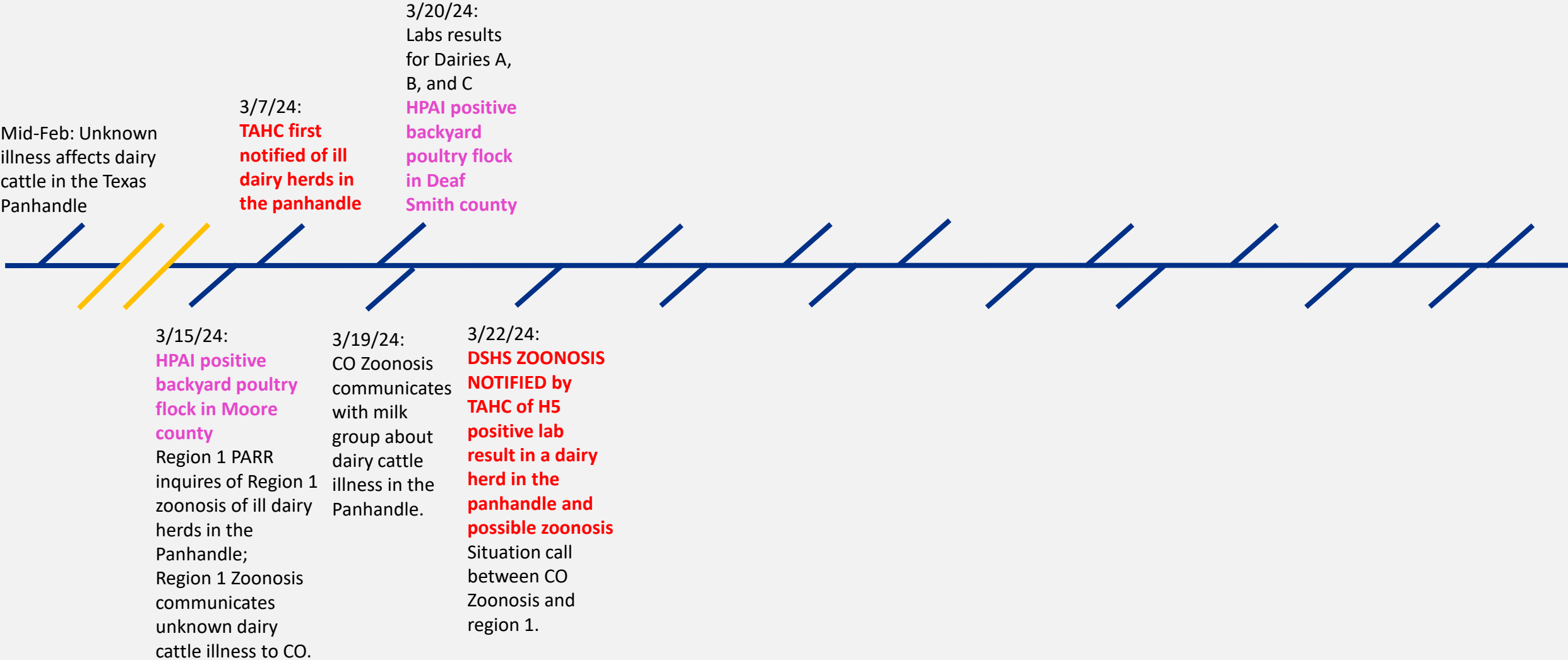
3/15/24:
HPAI positive backyard poultry flock in Moore county
Region 1 PAR inquires of Region 1 zoonosis of ill dairy herds in the Panhandle;
Region 1 Zoonosis communicates unknown dairy cattle illness to CO.

3/19/24:
CO Zoonosis communicates with milk group about dairy cattle illness in the Panhandle.

Regional Response Activities

- Zoonosis becomes aware of dairy cattle illness
- **HPAI presumptive positive dairy cattle results**

Timeline of Response Activities



Dairy Veterinarian Communication

- Friday March 22, 2024 @ 11:50 am
- Awareness of possible zoonosis

Wanted to share these preliminary results with you FYSA. Sharing owner details with you in confidentiality.

This dairy is located in [REDACTED]

Milk and blood were sampled from affected cows on day 1 and day 2 of their impacted cattle that met the following criteria:

Fever >104.0 F

Creamy mastitis in one quarter

Poorly digested feed = lots of particles in manure (fiber, corn, etc.)

Low rumen motility

The milk from these individual cows was pooled at Iowa State into 2 influenza A PCR pools.

Both of the pools tested positive with CT values of 15.2 and 15.9 respectively.

The lab said they will type out this virus.

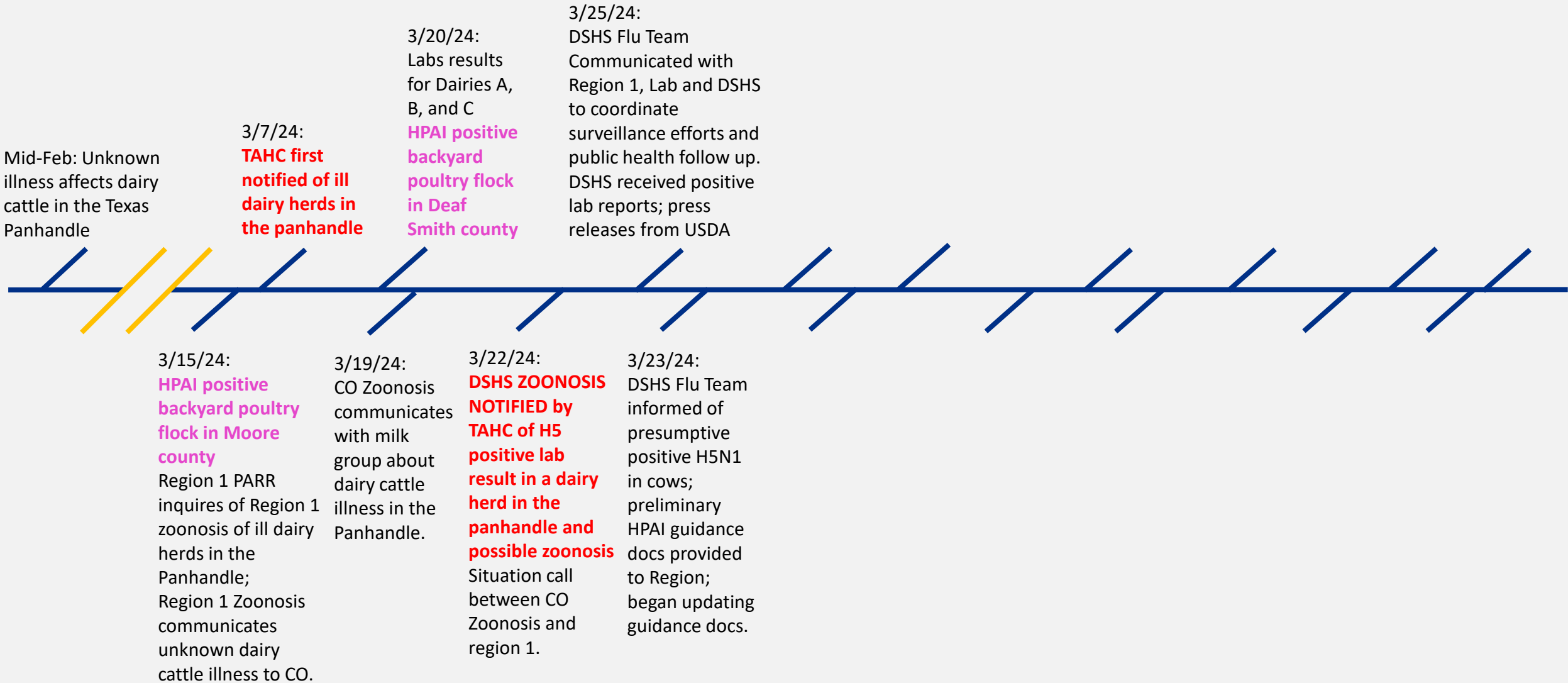
This dairy also has sick human beings. One of the co-owners reported to me yesterday he'd had a high fever, chattering teeth, chills, night sweats, and lower back pain. Two employees, a night milker and regular cow feeder both have severe conjunctivitis with scleral injection, periorbital edema, and swollen eyelids each in one eye.

I encouraged all of them to seek medical care.

Regional Response Activities

- Zoonosis becomes aware of dairy cattle illness
- HPAI presumptive positive dairy cattle results
- **DSHS situational awareness**

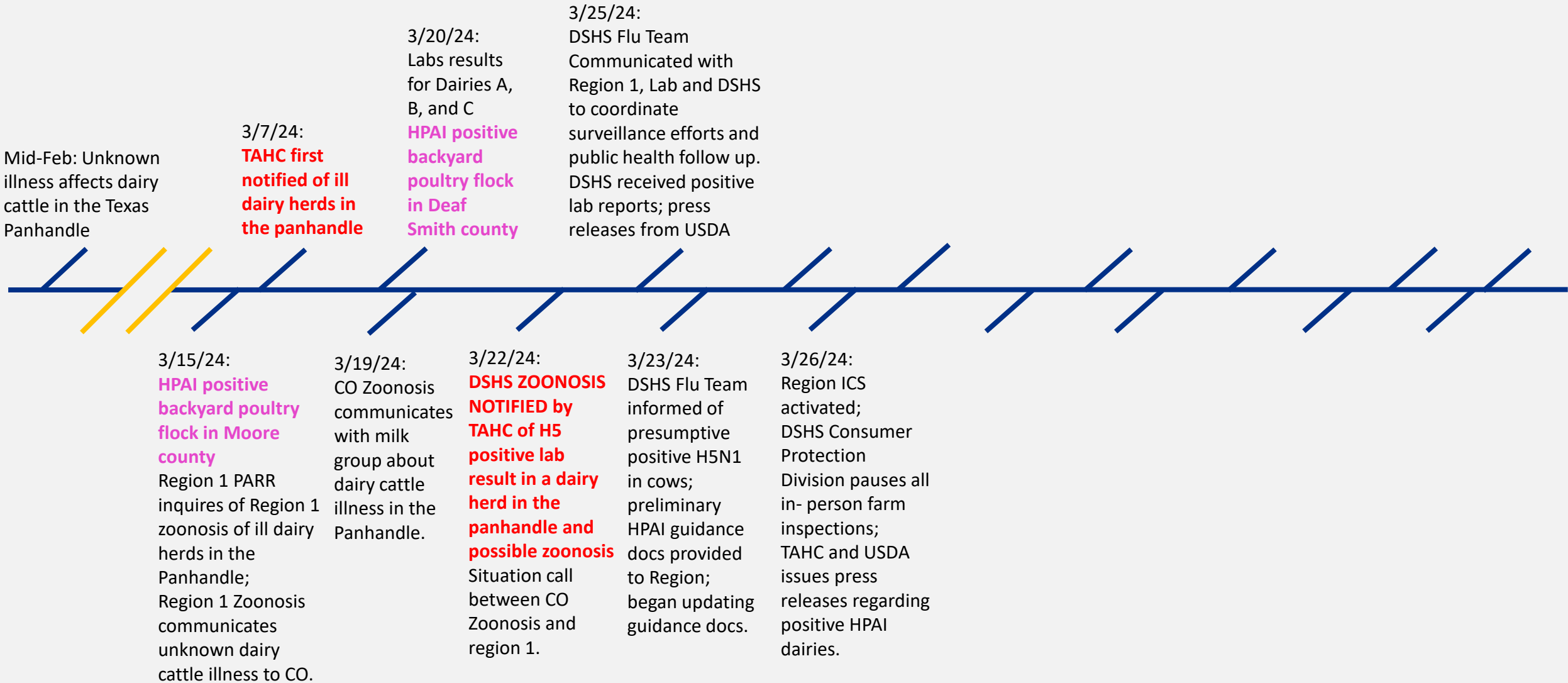
Timeline of Response Activities



Regional Response Activities

- Zoonosis becomes aware of dairy cattle illness
- HPAI presumptive positive dairy cattle results
- DSHS situational awareness
- **Activation of Incident Command System (ICS)**

Timeline of Response Activities



ASSIGNMENT LIST (ICS 204)

1. Incident Name: 24-0001 Panhandle Dairy		2. Operational Period: Date From: 04/03/2024 Date To: 0700 Time From: 04/03/2024 Time To: 1900		3. Branch:
4. Operations Personnel: Name _____ Contact Number(s) _____ Operations Section Chief: [REDACTED] Branch Director: _____				Division: Group: Veterinary Staging Area:
5. Resources Assigned:				Reporting Location, Special Equipment and Supplies, Remarks, Notes, Information
Resource Identifier	Leader	# of Persons	Contact (e.g., phone, pager, radio frequency, etc.)	
Team Leader Vet	Dr. Abdul	3	[REDACTED]	
Cristi Olszewski			[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]			[REDACTED]	
6. Work Assignments: Work with stakeholders to identify suspect cases and arrange for testing. Maintain contact with veterinarians in Region Obtain names of the dairies where employees work and the number of employees working in the cattle hospital areas on the dairies (handling affected cattle). Inquire about any employees who handle sick/dead animals and those experiencing symptoms.				
7. Special Instructions: Maintain communications with IC.				
8. Communications (radio and/or phone contact numbers needed for this assignment):				
Name/Function	Primary Contact: indicate cell, pager, or radio (frequency/system/channel)			
[REDACTED]	806-787-5602			
[REDACTED]	806-516-3250			
9. Prepared by: Name: [REDACTED] Position/Title: Planning Chief Signature: [REDACTED]				
ICS 204	IAP Page 4	Date/Time: 04/02/2024 1600		

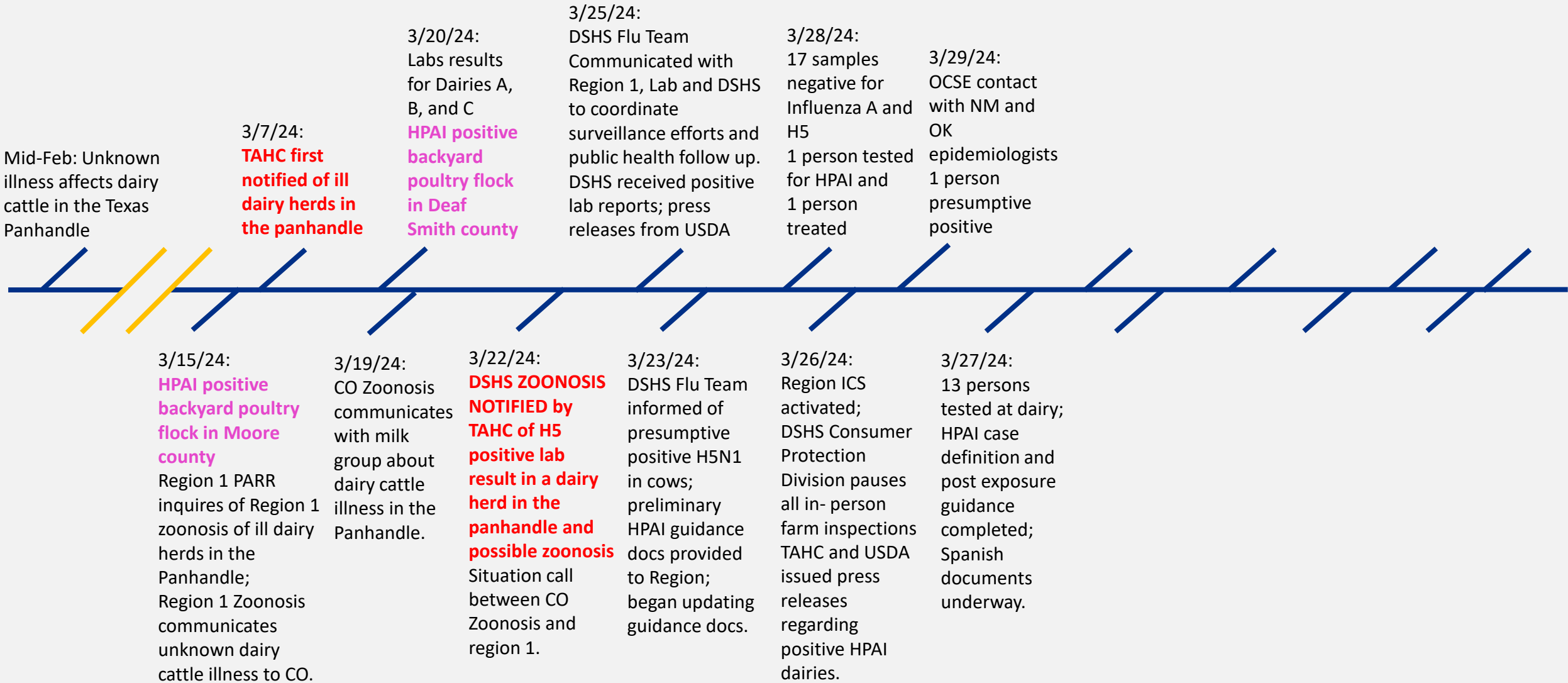
INCIDENT OBJECTIVES (ICS 202)

1. Incident Name: 24-0001 Panhandle Dairy		2. Operational Period: Date From: 04/03/2024 Date To: 04/03/2024 Time From: 0700 Time To: 1900	
3. Objective(s): 1. Protect health and safety of public health personnel responding to the incident. 2. Identify and investigate potential High Consequence Avian Influenza (HPAI) infections in symptomatic exposed dairy workers. 3. Monitor for symptoms of influenza-like illness in exposed dairy workers. 4. Distribute educational materials related to prevention of HPAI infections. 5. Coordinate public health response effort with responding state/federal agencies, stakeholders in affected areas, including, but not limited to, veterinarians, dairy facilities, medical community, LRN laboratory, and local health departments. 6. Maintain situational awareness, communicate, sharing pertinent information, with involved DSHS programs, DSHS SMOC, and as appropriate, other stakeholders.			
4. Operational Period Command Emphasis:			
General Situational Awareness Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) confirmed in mid-lactation cattle at [REDACTED] CDC confirmed positive case in dairy worker in [REDACTED] Tamiflu was given to the individual and his housemates. PPE (goggles, gowns, gloves, face shields, surgical masks) to be provided to dairies, if requested, for their employees. DSHS is providing guidance to affected dairies about how to minimize workers' exposure and how people who work with affected cattle can monitor for flu-like symptoms and get tested.			
5. Site Safety Plan Required? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved Site Safety Plan(s) Located at:			
6. Incident Action Plan (the items checked below are included in this Incident Action Plan):			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ICS 203	<input type="checkbox"/> ICS 207	Other Attachments:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ICS 204	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ICS 208	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> ICS 205	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Chart	_____	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ICS 205A	<input type="checkbox"/> Weather Forecast/Tides/Currents	_____	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ICS 206		_____	
7. Prepared by: Name: [REDACTED] Position/Title: Planning Chief Signature: [REDACTED]			
8. Approved by Incident Commander: Name: [REDACTED] Signature: [REDACTED]			
ICS 202	IAP Page 2	Date/Time: 04/02/2024 1600	

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- Activation of Incident Command System (ICS)
- **Employee testing**

Timeline of Response Activities



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PE:

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CS: OD episcleral injection and serous ocular discharge of 12 hours

dur

HX:

or a



Photo courtesy of Dr. Cherissa Abdul Hamid



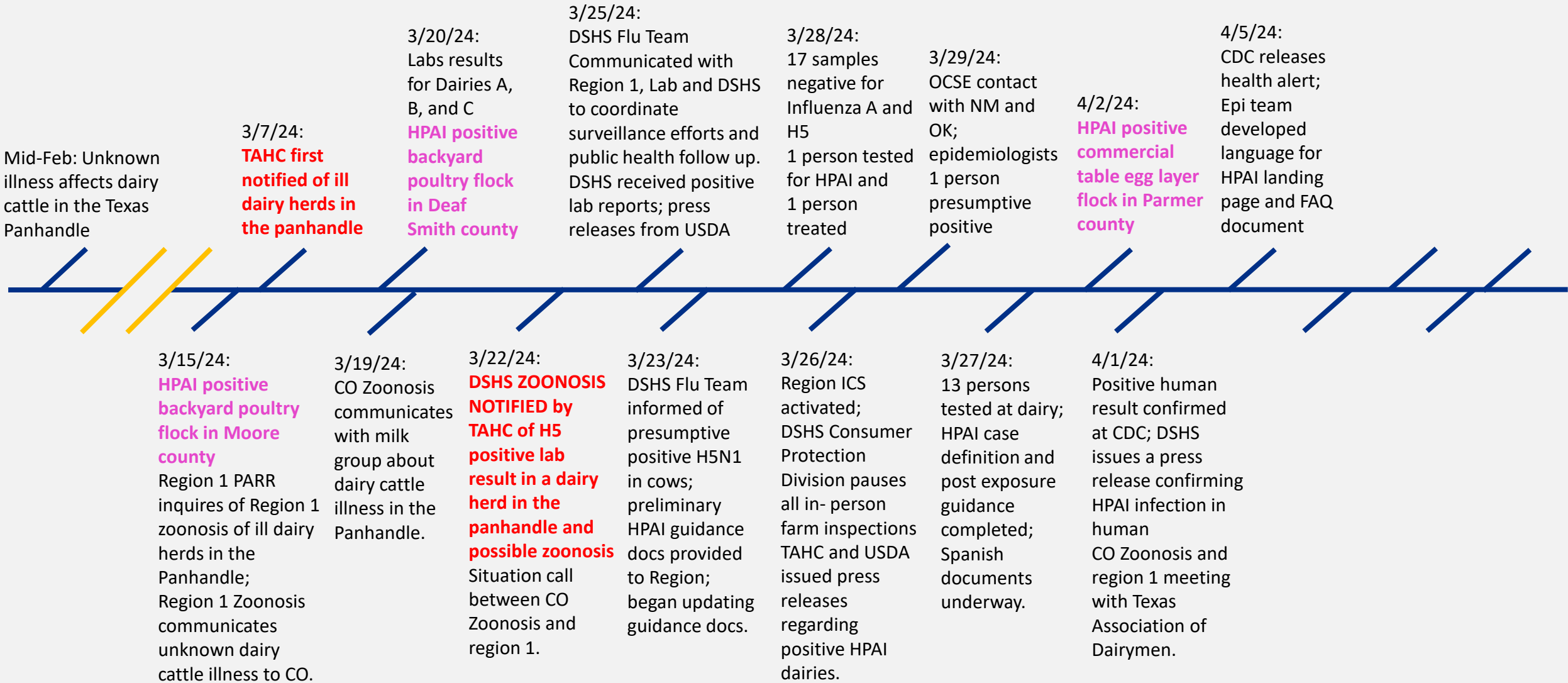
Photo courtesy of Dr. Scott Milton

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- Employee testing
- **CDC confirmed HPAI positive test result**

Timeline of Response Activities



DSHS Press Release

DSHS Reports First Human Case of Avian Influenza in Texas

Subscribe to our email list

Sign up to receive DSHS email and text updates

[Sign up for Updates](#)

 NEWS RELEASE

April 1, 2024

Person Had Direct Contact With Dairy Cattle

The Texas Department of State Health Services is reporting a human case of avian influenza A(H5N1) virus in Texas. The case was identified in a person who had direct exposure to dairy

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- **Dairy outreach**

Dairy Outreach



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Avian Influenza ("Avian Flu") | March 27,

You are being given this information because you were suspected to be sick, with avian influenza virus ("avian illness in people ranging from mild to severe. While we want you to be aware of the possibility and give you in

How sick animals could spread flu to you

Sick animals can pass influenza virus to people in their
Services

Información sobre la posesposición a 27 de marzo

Usted está recibiendo esta información porque recientemente animales que se sospecha que están enfermos, con el virus. Algunos virus de la influenza aviar pueden causar enfermedades leves a graves. Aunque las enfermedades en humanos son raras, queremos que esté al tanto de esa posibilidad y darle información.



DSHS Northwest Texas

Public Health Region 1 Serving You

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Public Health Region 1 (PHR 1) has a limited supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that can be provided to dairies with sick cattle suspected of having avian influenza infection. This PPE is to provide worker protection in areas of the facility where there is a high risk of transmission (sick pen, milking floor, reproductive pen, etc.). These resources are being provided to fill temporary gaps in PPE availability for affected dairies. Dairy facilities should purchase PPE for continual protection of their workers going forward.

Available PPE includes:

- Face Shields
- Goggles
- Gowns
- Gloves
- Surgical masks (not N95 masks)

A pre-determined amount of PPE will be provided to requesting dairies.

Dairies must call prior to picking up PPE.
Point of Contact: Rick Tull 806-787-6093

PPE can be picked up at:
DSHS PHR 1 Amarillo Office
3407 Pony Express Way, Amarillo, TX 79118

PUTTING ON PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Based on the level of precautions required, such as standard and contact, droplet or airborne. The procedure for putting on and removing PPE should be tailored to the specific situation.

Wear the gown from
neck to knees, arms
tucked around the back
and waist



RESPIRATOR

Wear the respirator
bands at middle

Secure the
respirator over the
bridge of the nose and
under the chin

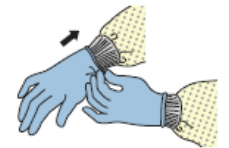


PUTTING ON A FACE SHIELD

Wear the face shield
over the eyes and adjust to fit



Wear the gloves
if isolation gown

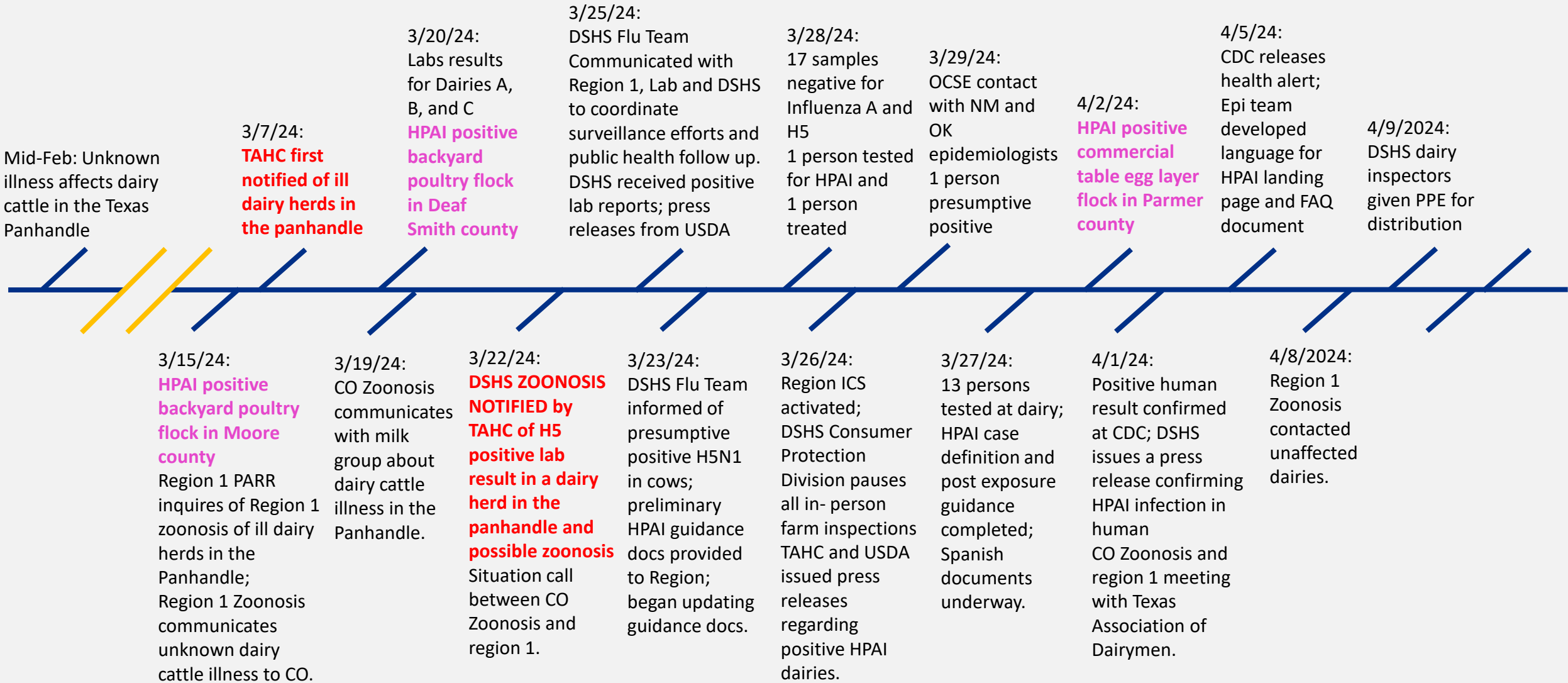


REMOVING PRACTICES TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HEAD OF CONTAMINATION

Wash hands
thoroughly with soap
and water for at least
20 seconds, or use
hand sanitizer if hands
are not heavily contaminated



Timeline of Response Activities



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- DSHS situational awareness
- Activation of Incident Command System (ICS)
- Employee testing
- CDC confirmed HPAI positive test result
- Dairy outreach
- **Employee poster**

Bird Flu Guidance for Farm Workers

1. Infected animals can pass disease to people in their milk, saliva (spit), feces (poop), and other body fluids.

2. Signs and symptoms of infection may include:



- Eye redness (conjunctivitis)
- Fever (temperature of 100°F (37.8°C) or greater) or chills



- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Headaches



- Fatigue
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Difficulty breathing/shortness of breath (call 911 immediately)

3. Personal protective equipment (PPE) should be put on and taken off in areas away from animals.



- Masks
- Safety glasses, goggles or face shields
- Disposable gloves
- Overalls/gown



4. Do not drink unpasteurized milk. Do not take milk home.



5. Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer after touching animals or their milk, saliva (spit), feces (poop), or other body fluids.

6. Do not touch your face, eyes, mouth, phone, food, or other commonly used objects until after you've washed your hands.

Even though it's rare for humans to get sick from bird flu, we want you to know how to monitor your health and the health of your family.



For questions and 24/7 support, contact 806-778-7391 to reach the Texas Department of State Health Services in Lubbock. Let them know you work with cattle.

Guía Sobre la Gripe Aviar para Trabajadores de Lecherías

1. Los animales infectados pueden transmitir enfermedades a las personas a través de la leche, la saliva, el excremento, y otros fluidos.

2. Los signos y síntomas de una infección pueden incluir:



- Enrojecimiento de los ojos (conjuntivitis)
- Fiebre (temperatura de 100°F (37.8°C) o más) o escalofríos



- Tos
- Dolor de garganta
- Secreción o congestión nasal
- Dolores de cabeza



- Fatiga
- Diarrea
- Náuseas
- Dificultad para respirar/falta de aire (llame al 911 de inmediato)

3. El equipo de protección personal (PPE en inglés) debe ponerse y quitarse en un área alejada de los animales.



- Máscaras
- Gafas, anteojos de seguridad o protectores faciales
- Guantes desechables
- Bata/delantal



4. No tome leche no pasteurizada. No se lleve leche a casa.



5. Lávese las manos con agua y jabón o gel desinfectante después de tocar animales o leche, saliva, excremento, y otros fluidos.

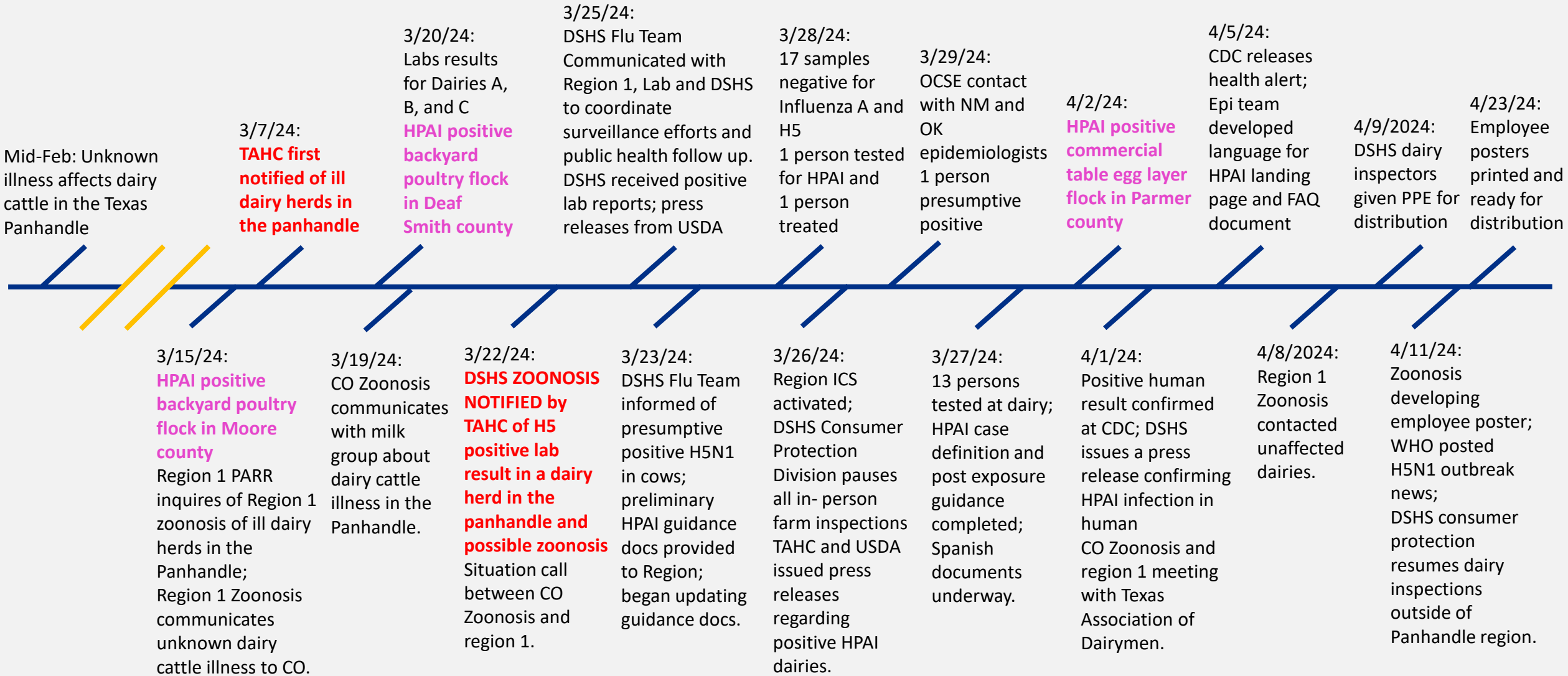
6. No se toque la cara, los ojos, la boca, su teléfono, la comida ni otros objetos hasta después de lavarse las manos.

Aunque es raro que los humanos se enfermen a causa de la influenza aviar, queremos que sepa cómo controlar su salud y la de su familia.



Si tiene preguntas y necesita ayuda 24/7, comuníquese al 806-778-7391 para comunicarse con el Departamento de Servicios de Salud del Estado de Texas, Región 1 de Salud Pública. Hágales saber que trabaja con ganado.

Timeline of Response Activities



Regional Response Activities

- Zoonosis becomes aware of dairy cattle illness
- HPAI presumptive positive dairy cattle results
- DSHS situational awareness
- Activation of Incident Command System (ICS)
- Employee testing
- CDC confirmed HPAI positive test result
- Dairy outreach
- Employee poster
- **Provider outreach**

Provider Outreach

- In person visits with major hospitals and physicians throughout the region
- Distributed HPAI poster as well as posters on regularly notifiable conditions
- Provided education on HPAI clinical signs
- Provided testing criteria, sample collection, and testing methodology
- Lobbied for enrollment in syndromic surveillance systems such as Essence

Challenges

- Distance
- Demographics
- Apprehension
- Communication

Distance

- Region 1 covers over 40,000 miles in the upper panhandle
- On average staff had to travel 2.5 hours to report to any of the affected dairies
- Rural roads with no turning lanes or shoulders
 - Unpaved
- Dairies are primarily located far outside of any towns where assistance would be difficult or impossible to receive
- Dangers of deer crossing, loose debris (rocks), high gusts, dust storms, rain, hail

Demographics

- Most employees are Hispanic male
 - Guatemalan, Mexican
- No high school diploma
- Predominant spoken language K'iche'
 - K'iche' is a newly written language, many employees cannot read nor write the language
 - Many employees do not speak nor write Spanish
- Undocumented
 - Not willing to miss work due to threat of being fired
 - Fear of deportation
- Most employees live in shared housing
 - Isolation and quarantine difficult if not impossible to achieve

Apprehension

- Farm Workers Concerns
 - Government Agency
- Producers/ Owners
 - Economic Impact
- Dairy Veterinarian
 - Job security concerns

Farm Workers Concerns

- Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
- All government agencies are the same in their eyes

Economic Impact

- HPAI in poultry
 - Depopulation
 - Disinfection
 - Testing of environmental samples
 - Restocking
- HPAI in cattle
 - No protocols
- Visitors not allowed on premises

Job Security Concerns

The private veterinarians have several concerns;

1. They do not feel they are getting results back in a timely fashion.
2. They are concerned about preserving their client-patient relationships.
3. They are not sure how it is moving farm to farm but they are considering a number of things like feed mills.

-In regards to symptoms of conjunctivitis which do not respond to treatment.
-Dr. Abdul has let them know that the hospital pens are developing
-She also learned that the hospital pens are developing

Good morning 🌞

I am getting my day started before additional reports/ calls come in. Based on a conversation with one of the vets yesterday, he is very concerned about his job security and reputation.

He wants a letter that he can present to the employers and employees justifying what we want to do and why (preferable written by a vet). He also believes that this would help get more employees on board with testing (due to immigration status and job security concerns).

He has been in communication with USDA and has told them the same.

provide supplies to their workers

positive milk samples and the
hope for their business which could

To me, we need to coordinate with the private vet and TAHC/USDA. This could be substantial.

However, Dr. Abdul has reached out to the submitting veterinarian. She has explained the importance of testing workers, and the vet will communicate with their dairy client to call Dr. Abdul so that we can coordinate testing. We feel that preserving the vet-client-patient relationship is important. Otherwise, these private vets may lose their jobs and suffer other negative consequences.

Now that USDA is involved, things may change tomorrow and positive dairies may be disclosed to regulatory authorities including us. I have also reached out to USDA and TAHC that we are willing to test symptomatic workers. I hope this can be a coordinated effort between animal health and DSHS in a true one health fashion.

Disinformation and Misinformation

- Avian flu
 - Is a conspiracy theory
 - Government is doing this to monitor the activities of the dairies and their employees
- Testing
 - Will get you deported
 - Positive employees will abuse worker's comp time
 - Work will not be done effectively due to insufficient employees
- Do not test cattle
 - Implications of positive test results unknown

Closing Remarks

- Strengthen intra-agency relationships
- Strengthened relationships with other agencies
- Strengthened relationships with dairy veterinarians
- Improve relationships with producers and dairy owners
- Improve relationships with beef cattle industry
- Build trust in SME in DSHS programs
- After Action Review of the response



[GOVPUB-A-PURL-gpo21941.pdf](#)
([govinfo.gov](#))

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- Uyeki, T. M., Milton, S., Abdul Hamid, C., Reinoso Webb, C., Presley, S. M., Shetty, V., ... & Davis, C. T. (2024). Highly pathogenic avian influenza A (H5N1) Virus infection in a dairy farm worker. *New England Journal of Medicine*.
- Texas Department of State Health Services- [2024 Avian Influenza A\(H5N1\) in Dairy Cattle | Texas DSHS](#)
- USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service- [Federal Order Requiring Testing for and Reporting of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza \(HPAI\) in Livestock](#)

Thank you!

2024 Avian Influenza A (H5N1): Updates on the Texas Investigation

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