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## **South Africa - Republic of**

**Post:** Pretoria

### **Southern African countries suspend poultry imports from South Africa**

**Report Categories:**

Poultry and Products

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**Report Highlights:**

The outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza in South Africa led to Southern African countries, including Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe suspending live birds, poultry meat, table eggs and other unprocessed poultry product imports from South Africa. These countries accounted for about 70 percent of the South African poultry meat exports in 2016. It should be noted that South Africa is not a major exporter of poultry, with exports accounting for about five percent of broiler meat production in South Africa (see Table 2). Nonetheless, if South Africa is not able to contain the highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak it could have a significant impact on the South African poultry industry which is currently recovering from the drought and recent changes in brining regulations.

## Background

On June 1, 2017 the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) released a [notification](#) of an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI, ‘bird flu’) in a commercial chicken flock in Zimbabwe, which killed 7,000 chickens and led to the culling of about 140,000 birds. This led to [Botswana](#), [Mozambique](#), [South Africa](#) and [Zambia](#) suspending live birds, poultry meat, table eggs and other unprocessed poultry products imports from Zimbabwe.

To protect its more than 140 million chickens, South Africa intensified surveillance programs and inspections of all consignments at all ports of entries, particularly with Zimbabwe. However, on June 22, 2017, the OIE published a [notification](#) of an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI, ‘bird flu’) in a breeder flock in South Africa, which killed 5,000 chickens. On June 26, 2017, the South African Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) [reported](#) a second outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza in a commercial layer flock. Consequently, about 260,000 birds have since been culled. On July 10, 2017, the OIE released a [notification](#) of two separate bird flu outbreaks on two commercial layers farms in South Africa, which killed 1,039 birds. The first outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza in South Africa led to [Southern African countries](#), including Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe suspending poultry and poultry product imports from South Africa. All the poultry importers in South Africa and Zimbabwe have been notified that their import permits have been cancelled. It is not clear from the notifications when these countries will lift the ban on imports of poultry and poultry products from both South Africa and Zimbabwe.

## Implications of avian influenza outbreaks on Southern African poultry trade

In suspending imports from Zimbabwe, DAFF noted that South Africa imports “very little” poultry and poultry products from Zimbabwe. On the other hand, Botswana and Mozambique import live chickens (weighing not more than 185 G) from Zimbabwe (see Table 1). In 2016, Zimbabwe accounted for about 42 percent of Botswanan live chickens (weighing not more than 185 G) imports. Zimbabwe’s poultry meat exports are negligible. However, in 2016, Zimbabwe, exported live chickens (weighing not more than 185 G) valued about US\$1.9 million.

**Table 1: Zimbabwe live chicken exports (HS code 010511)**

Trading Partner	Unit	2014	2015	2016
Mozambique	NO	1,580,008	1,763,624	494,736
Botswana	NO	72,624	97,920	135,980
Malawi	NO	139,830	141,692	135,644
Zambia	NO	106	0	0
Congo	NO	590	0	0
Kenya	NO	38,822	27,376	0
Rwanda	NO	4,024	0	0
Tanzania	NO	8,260	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>1,844,264</b>	<b>2,030,612</b>	<b>766,360</b>

Source: GTA

More importantly, it is too early to determine whether the bird flu outbreak will have a large negative

impact on the South African poultry production or supply of poultry on the local market due to South Africa's current inability to export poultry to certain countries. The Southern African countries that suspended poultry and poultry product imports from South Africa accounted for about 70 percent of the South African poultry meat exports in 2016 (see Table 2). On the other hand, these countries accounted for about 3.5 percent of 1.24 million live chickens (weighing not more than 185 G) exported by South Africa in 2016. If South Africa doesn't contain the highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak it could have a negative impact on the South African poultry industry, which is currently recovering from the drought and recent changes in brining regulations. It is still unclear if U.S. poultry exports to other Southern African countries will be affected by the outbreak, since some U.S. consignments are imported into South Africa and then transshipped to other countries in Southern African.

**Table 2: South African poultry meat exports**

<b>Trading Partner</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Mozambique	T	16,719	20,493	18,746
Namibia	T	12,777	15,783	16,784
Lesotho	T	22,163	18,286	15,998
Zambia	T	2,925	4,185	7,770
Zimbabwe	T	6,629	7,501	7,620
Botswana	T	3,093	3,948	3,996
Swaziland	T	2,125	1,787	2,004
Congo Dem. Rep.	T	485	717	1,536
Angola	T	184	335	1113
Malawi	T	332	183	312
Other countries	T	2303	1,541	2,285
<b>Total</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>69,735</b>	<b>74,759</b>	<b>78,164</b>

Source: GTA