

Bird Flu Found in Italy and Greece

JACKIE BULLOCK
Staff Writer

The bird flu virus that has killed 88 people worldwide has been discovered in Italy and Greece. Seventeen dead swans were found in three Italian regions—Puglia and Calabria, located in southern Italy, and Sicily. An Associated Press story reported that Italian health minister, Francesco Storace, said that of the seventeen dead swans five were found to be infected with the H5N1 virus. Storace also said that the birds had arrived from the Balkans and were most likely pushed south by the cold weather.

Greek authorities also reported on Saturday, February 11, that bird flu had been found in northern Greece. Health officials in Azerbaijan said that dead birds from the country's Caspian Sea coast were found to be infected with the virus. The virus also has been detected in wild swans in Bulgaria.

No human cases of bird flu have been reported from the countries.

Also, in Nigeria, it is thought that bird flu may be in as many as eight of the country's 36 states, causing officials to believe that the virus may have been spreading in Africa long before it was detected. Three states in northern Nigeria have been confirmed as having the virus: Kaduna, Kano, and Plateau.

In Kaduna, Nigerian health officials were awaiting confirmation of test results on two brothers, a four-year-old and a four-month old, who may be the first Africans infected with the virus. The children's father said that the children had become ill after all 250 of his geese, chickens, and turkeys died suddenly. The father reported that the children had high temperatures and were coughing up blood. He said that he took the children to the hospital and that they had recovered—adding that

the eldest child had returned to school. The family lives close to a farm where the virus has been confirmed.

A commercial farm in Kaduna that raises chickens, geese and ostriches was discovered to have the virus; 46,000 birds were slaughtered. Farmers in other northern regions also have reported mass deaths of poultry.

Bird flu began infecting poultry in Asia in 2003, causing the slaughter of millions of birds. It is highly contagious in birds but no human to human cases of transmission have been reported. Humans become infected when they come into contact with sick birds but scientists fear that the virus may mutate. The World Health Organization has confirmed a total of 165 human cases in countries including Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Iraq, Thailand, Turkey, and Vietnam.

The Olympic Tradition

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On Friday night, the world came together to celebrate the opening ceremony of the 20th Winter Olympic Games, held this year in the Italian city of Turin.

The Olympic tradition dates back to 776 BC when the ancient Greeks began the competitions, then a religious ceremony and source of national pride. Ancient Greek cities competed against one another for nearly 12 centuries, encouraging good relations between cities and raising national pride.


Today's Modern Games carry on the tradition of peaceful competition and were reinstated in 1896, expanding the competition to

include athletes from 14 nations. By the 1900 Games in Paris, women had been allowed to join the competition, reflecting the suffrage movements occurring across the globe.

Eighty National Olympic Committees are represented at this year's Winter Games in Turin. 2600 athletes will compete in 15 different disciplines for the 84 titles to be awarded. Of these 2600 competitors, only 38% are women.

The longstanding meaning behind the Olympic Games has evolved into a concept that allows conflicting nations to compete in peace. Although tragedies like the terrorist attack at the Munich Games in 1972 and the Atlanta bombing in 1996

cannot be forgotten, the Olympic goal of peaceful competition and worldwide unity overcomes more often than not. The ideal of the Olympic Truce can be seen in the unified front presented by athletes from North and South Korea, competing as one team bearing the name Koreans. During Friday night's opening ceremony, Brian Williams commented that "Sports have done what politics and diplomats have been trying to do for years." By Monday evening, the American team had won four gold medals and two silvers. Competition will continue through the 26th of February and footage from the day's events airs every evening at 8pm on NBC.



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Teacher Network Fair

Are you interested in the teaching profession? If so, the Teacher Network Fair is your chance to connect with representatives from public, private, charter, and magnet schools for full-time teaching positions.

This event will be held on Thursday, March 9 from 9:30am-12:30pm in Belk Dining Hall.

If teaching is the career of your choice, make sure to take advantage of this opportunity.