

# The WHO awaits bird-flu samples from China

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The Geneva-based World Health Organization says it's awaiting delivery of about 20 bird flu virus samples that China has, so far, refused to supply.

WHO officials have been negotiating with China's Ministry of Agriculture, trying to obtain the live viral samples. The health officials told the Voice of America the dispute stems from resistance from Chinese academics who fear giving up their research might deprive China of scientific recognition.

China has routinely sent virus genetic sequence information to the U.N. organization but no actual tissue samples have been submitted since

2004, VOA reported. That, complain health experts, has hampered research of the H5N1 virus.

Officials say China has recently agreed to hand over approximately 20 live animal viral samples but none has yet been received.

The WHO acknowledges Chinese allegations that foreign scientists have previously published the work of China's academics without giving them credit, VOA said.

The health organization has confirmed 184 human cases of the H5N1 virus worldwide since 2003. A total of 103 of those have been fatal, including 10 in China.

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