

Czechs detect bird flu as new Europe outbreak feared

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A highly contagious bird flu has been confirmed at a Czech farm, officials said Saturday after a French farm union warned of the risk of a new outbreak in Europe.

Czech official Petr Vorlicek said "the highly pathogenic H5N8 subtype lethal for [birds](#)" was found at a small [farm](#) 150 kilometres (94 miles) southeast of the capital Prague.

Vorlicek, spokesman for the State Veterinary Administration (SVS), said the infection at the farm in Stepanov nad Svratkou was most likely imported by wild water birds.

The SVS, which says the H5N8 has never been reported to have spread to humans, said the farm bred three ducks and 12 hens, of which six infected with the virus died within two days.

The remaining animals at the farm were culled on Saturday morning, veterinarians said.

"We will create... a ten-kilometre (six-mile) protected area around the farm," SVS head Zbynek Semerad added.

The French farm union, Coordination rurale, said Friday that H5N8 has been detected in recent weeks in farms in Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania as well as among [wild birds](#) in Poland.

It warned authorities to urgently stop shipments from the infected countries and alert customs agents to the risk.

It recalled how French poultry farms and the producers of foie gras were seriously affected by the 2017 epidemic when millions of birds were culled in Europe.

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