

Conditions for Rejection of Poultry at Post Mortem

Pericarditis in Poultry

Post Mortem Disposition



Figure 1: Chronic pericarditis in a duck with no secondary conditions - partial rejection of affected offal.

Figure 2: Severe active pericarditis in a broiler. No secondary lesions were found and salmonella test result was negative resulting in partial rejection.

Figure 3: Pericarditis with associated perihepatitis in ducks. Carcass and offal were rejected.

Figure 4: Minor lesions of the pericardium compared to a healthy heart in turkeys. No associated lesions were noted resulting in sole rejection of affected parts.

FSS Responsibilities

Post Mortem Disposition

Total rejection of pericarditis associated with secondary conditions or when salmonella test results received within the FCI are positive to *S. enteritidis* or *S. typhimurium*.

Partial rejection: in all other cases.

Note: when salmonella test results are not received the OV must take the professional decision that is deemed necessary as regards to the level of rejection.

Recording of the condition

The condition must be recorded on the Post Mortem Inspection section of OWS under "Pericarditis".

Further Information

Definition

Inflammation of the pericardium, normally with loss of translucency or increase in opacity of the pericardium associated with cloudy or turbid fluid in the pericardial sac. Severe cases may lead to the heart being obscured by dense white inflammatory tissue.

Remarks/Consequences

Often pericarditis that has affected birds early in life is resolved by the immune system. However, the pericardial sac may become adherent to the epicardium over part of the surface area.

Causes

Bacterial infection is the most common cause of pericarditis. The infection can occur early in life as a chick or later during the growing period. The causative bacterial infection can be subsequent to viral respiratory disease challenge. Some viruses, such as reovirus, are able to cause pericarditis directly.

What is the data on rejects used for?

Incidence of pericarditis is a very important indicator of disease incidence within a flock or within a poultry operation. A high incidence of this condition can be caused by:

- Disease problems in breeder flocks
- Poor egg hygiene
- Poor farm hygiene
- Respiratory viruses

The incidence of pericarditis is used by the production team to monitor and focus disease prevention and control measures in conjunction with their veterinary support.

Current Position

The EU Zoonoses Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 requires Member States to take effective measures to detect and control *Salmonellas* of public health significance. Testing for *Salmonella spp.* and if positive for *S. Enteritidis* and *S. Typhimurium* is now happening on most farms before any birds are sent to slaughter. Additional testing on *Salmonella* and other zoonotic agents is also happening at other points of the food chain. It is understood that the level of *Salmonella* within the national poultry flock is currently below 1%. Further information on the national control plan can be found at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/atoz/zoonoses/ncp.htm>

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