

US unveils \$1bn bird flu plan to tackle rising egg prices

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The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced a \$1 billion initiative to combat the bird flu outbreak that has led to the culling of over 35 million chickens and caused egg prices to soar.

The plan designates \$500 million for biosecurity measures, \$100 million for vaccine research, and \$400 million for financial relief to affected farmers. To curb further losses, the USDA will cover up to 75% of costs for commercial egg farms implementing preventive measures and offer free consulting services.

Egg prices have surged, reaching \$5 per dozen in January—an increase of 53% from 2024. The USDA projects a further 41% rise, prompting the government to consider temporarily importing eggs that meet US safety standards. In addition, the agency plans to eliminate certain regulations contributing to high costs.

USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins stated that while these efforts won't

yield immediate price reductions, consumers could see relief by spring or summer. Meanwhile, the sharp price hike has led to surprising trends, including single-egg sales in New York and large-scale egg thefts in Pennsylvania, where thieves recently stole 100,000 eggs worth \$40,000.

The USDA remains focused on long-term solutions to stabilize egg supply and prices while mitigating future outbreaks.

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