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NEWS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***GOVERNOR NAPOLITANO DECLARES STATE OF EMERGENCY TO
CONTAIN VIRUS THAT THREATENS ARIZONA POULTRY***

PHOENIX – Governor Janet Napolitano today declared a state of emergency through the state Department of Agriculture following the discovery of the bird virus Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) in Arizona. The declaration prohibits the transport of live or dead birds of all types including poultry, such as chicken and turkey, which might carry the disease into Arizona.

The order was issued upon confirmation of the first case of END in Arizona. It calls upon the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to expand its quarantine zone to include Yuma County, La Paz County, and the portion of Mohave County south of the Grand Canyon.

END is highly virulent and usually fatal to birds, especially larger, exotic species and chickens. It is communicable and spread through bird feathers, bird secretions, soil and human-to-bird contact. In California, 975,000 birds had to be destroyed because of END. Eggs and poultry, however, are safe to consume.

While END can affect people, it does not pose a serious risk to human health. The disease in humans is usually limited to mild inflammation of the tissues surrounding the eye, and occurs primarily among persons handling or coming into contact with infected birds.

Additionally, any equipment that is used for the processing of eggs or housing, feeding or watering of birds from quarantined areas of California or Nevada must be certified by the federal government as disinfected before the equipment can be permitted to be shipped to Arizona.

All vehicles that are transporting birds must now stop at an Arizona port of entry inspection station and provide the inspector with a valid certificate of health on the birds.

“The Department of Agriculture has done an outstanding job at quickly containing this outbreak,” Napolitano said. “Their efforts have helped to prevent it from becoming a statewide problem.”

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