Veterinary Extension

Poultry Owners

The United States aims to remain free from Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (bird flu). This means that the preferred course of action in the event of an outbreak is to immediately eradicate the disease.

Poultry Owners need to be on alert and protect their birds through proper biosecurity. Owners and their flocks must avoid any direct or indirect contact with wild birds or other poultry. If there is high mortality, owners should submit birds to be tested

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I think my birds have the flu. What do I do?

If your birds are dying at an alarming rate, you should immediately contact any of the following:

Ohio Department of Agriculture

Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory: (614) 728-6220
After Hours: (888) 456-3405.

US Department of Agriculture

Toll-free number
(866)-536-7593

Ohio Poultry Association

info@ohiopoultry.org
Phone: (614) 882-6111

If your birds are suspected of having influenza, they will be tested by ADDL

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Bird Flu

What is it?
How to avoid it?

Bird flu, or avian influenza, is a disease caused by influenza type A virus that can infect poultry. Most strains are low pathogenic. Highly pathogenic strains (HPAI) are highly contagious in birds and often cause death in poultry.

Q: Is this a new bird disease?

A: There are many different subtypes and strains of flu viruses that circulate, and can evolve into new strains. Those designated as HPAI can be devastating to poultry.

Q: Is it the same as the human influenza?

A: This particular version of the virus does not infect humans. It is strictly a bird disease, not a threat to human health as stated by CDC. Eggs, chicken and turkey are safe to eat.

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HPAI: Improve Biosecurity with Wildlife Deterrents

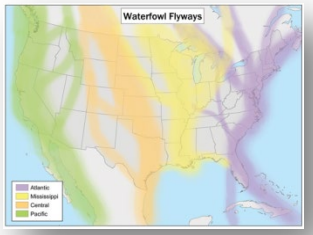
Certain diseases, including Avian Influenza, have little to no illness in wild waterfowl yet can have a huge impact in your domestic flock.

Strengthen your farm biosecurity by implementing wildlife management practices to limit exposure to your flock.

- :**Remove standing water.** Even shallow water can attract wildlife. Make sure to keep your birds away from this area. Do not walk or move equipment near areas visited by wild waterfowl.
- **Do not use pond water as drinking water**. Only provide clean filtered water to your birds.
- **Reduce wildlife feed sources**. Do not feed wildlife and have poultry feed in secured area.
- Add wildlife deterrents. Use decoys such as swans or predators and move frequently to improve effectiveness. Add fencing around ponds.

Q: How will I know if my birds get infected with this virus?

One of the earliest signs of the disease is increased death with up to 100% mortality in many cases. Birds will also show signs of sickness, twisted necks, blue and swollen faces and feet. The most consistent necropsy lesion was hemorrhages on the proventriculus (See pictures below).



Wild migratory waterfowl are thought to be the source of the disease. The state of Ohio is part of the Mississippi Flyway.

Q: Can this disease affect my backyard/show flock or 4-H project?

Yes, Avian influenza can infect all domestic poultry including chickens, turkeys, and ducks. It is important to have good biosecurity practices in place and keep your birds away from wild waterfowl.

Q: How can I protect my birds from this terrible disease?

BIOSECURITY

- Biosecurity includes all of the sanitary practices implemented to prevent the spread of diseases. These include:
  - Prevent any contact with wild birds
  - Prevent any contact with other animals, wild or domestic
  - Keep your birds sheltered in animal proof/ bird proof houses
  - Avoid visitors to your flock
  - Use disposable gloves and shoe covers before you come in contact with your birds or their environment
  - Wash your hands before and after contact with your birds or their environment
  - Use dedicated cloths to work with your birds, or use disposable coveralls
  - Avoid using surface water (ponds or lakes) as a source of drinking water for your birds
  - Acquire your feed from reliable sources and store it in a clean, dry, and cool place away from wild birds or wild animal's access, particularly rodents
- Visit '**Defend The Flock**' at aphis.usda.gov for excellent resources for bird biosecurity.

BIOSECURITY FOR BIRDS