



AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS
Animal Health Section
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The Animal Health Section of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets would like to make poultry producers aware of current cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza occurring in birds in the western and mid-western parts of the United States. The first cases occurred in December of 2014 in Oregon and Washington with subsequent cases occurring in 2015 in California, Idaho, Utah, Nevada, Minnesota, Arkansas and Missouri. Cases have occurred in wild birds and in both commercial and backyard flocks. Epidemiological reports confirm that the virus is being carried by certain types of wild migratory waterfowl that are present in both the Pacific and Mississippi flyways. No cases of avian influenza have been found in Vermont.

All bird owners, whether commercial producers or backyard enthusiasts, are encouraged to practice good biosecurity, prevent contact between their birds and wild birds, and to report sick birds or unusual bird deaths to State/Federal officials, either through your state veterinarian or through USDA's toll-free number at **1-866-536-7593**.

Resources for Poultry Producers

What does High Pathogenic Avian Influenza look like in birds?

- Disease Images Avian Influenza: Center for Food Security and Public Health (CFSPH) <http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/DiseaseInfo/disease-images.php?name=avian-influenza&lang=en>
- Fast Facts: Avian Influenza, Bird Flu Center for Food Security and Public Health (CFSPH) http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/FastFacts/pdfs/avian_influenza_F.pdf
- Link to migratory bird flyways <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/flyways.html>
- Clinical signs
 - Sudden death (flocks may see a large number of deaths)
 - Drop in egg production
 - Neurological signs such as circling or paralysis
 - Depression or loss of appetite
 - Ruffled feathers
 - Swollen combs
 - Cyanotic (blue tint to normally pink areas of skin due to lack of oxygen)
 - Conjunctivitis (red, runny eyes)
 - Respiratory signs

What steps can you take to reduce the chances of your birds becoming exposed?

- Practice good biosecurity (Biosecurity for Birds Website: <http://healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov/>)
 - Posters, slides, visual fact sheets and more, some in Spanish, are available to help you teach yourself and your staff how to reduce the chances that your birds will become sick.
- Livestock owners should observe these guidelines at all times but especially when there has been an outbreak of an infectious disease





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- First and foremost, use common sense: do not bring germs to your animals and do not bring your animals to germs.
- Limit contact with other animals.
- Limit your visits to other farms, and clean and disinfect your clothes and boots following visits.
- When bringing in new animals, establish a quarantine area on your farm. Do chores associated with these animals last. Clean and disinfect your clothes and boots following these chores, then shower. Use these quarantine practices for any sick animals too.
- Do not share tools or equipment with other farmers. If sharing high-priced items is absolutely necessary, thoroughly clean and disinfect the equipment (tires included) before it leaves your farm and before allowing it back on your farm.
- Exercise control over visitors' access to your animals.
- Limit exposure of your birds to migratory wild birds.
 - These virus strains can travel in wild birds without them appearing sick. People should avoid contact with sick/dead poultry or wildlife. If contact occurs, wash your hands with soap and water and change clothing before having any contact with healthy domestic poultry and birds.
- Report unusual, or unexpected, sickness or death to the Animal Health Section of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets at: **(802) 828-2421**.



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