



IDOA reminds livestock producers to protect their investments

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Illinois
Department of
Agriculture

HIGH PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA DETECTED IN TENNESSEE, ILLINOIS REMAINS FREE OF VIRUS

SPRINGFIELD -- Recently the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) confirmed the presence of highly pathogenic H7 avian influenza in a commercial chicken breeder flock in Tennessee. This is the first confirmed case of high path avian influenza (HPAI) this year in the United States. This is a new strain of the virus, identified as North American wild bird lineage H7N9. This is a different virus than what affected the United States in 2014-2015.

Today, Illinois remains free of HPAI thanks in part to the strict biosecurity measures followed by our state's livestock producers. Because of the discovery of a new strain of the virus, the Illinois Department of Agriculture would like to remind owners of poultry operations to take preventative measures, and be aware of the warning signs in order to prevent the spread of the virus in the event avian influenza enters into our state, or neighboring states.

“Premise registration is the first step you can take to protect your investment in an Illinois livestock industry,” said Dr. Mark Ernst, Illinois State Veterinarian. “A database of locations where livestock are produced, raised and kept will aide animal health officials in the event of an emergency.”

Registering your premises is easy to do and is absolutely free. Registering your premises does not increase your liability; instead it actually provides you with a level of protection for your investments. Your information will be kept private in a secure database. A system with proper trace back and trace forward capabilities provides a timely response and minimizes the economic impact in the event of an outbreak.

IDOA is reminding consumers that their eggs, turkey and chicken are safe to continue to eat. “There are no signs that the current virus poses a risk to our food supply,” said Dr. Kris Mazurczak, IDOA Bureau Chief of Meat and Poultry Inspection. “Consumers are reminded to follow proper handling of poultry products and to cook to an internal temperature of 165°F.” Additionally, birds from all impacted flocks will not enter into the food supply. The United States has the strongest avian influenza surveillance program in the world.

Avian influenza is spread from bird to bird by direct contact. The virus can also be spread by manure, equipment, vehicles, egg flats, crates, and people whose clothing or shoes have come in contact with the virus. The virus can remain active at moderate temperatures for long periods of time, and the virus can survive indefinitely in frozen material. No human infections associated with this virus have been detected at this time and the risk to individuals from these infections is low. The Illinois Department of Agriculture wants to remind producers to follow the below biosecurity measures to protect their flocks.

BIOSECURITY MEASURES

- Eliminate direct or indirect contact with wild waterfowl and other birds
- Keep poultry flocks away from any source of water that may have been contaminated by wild birds
- Permit only essential workers and vehicles to enter the farm
- Provide clean clothing and disinfection facilities for employees, and any approved visitors to farm
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect equipment and vehicles, including tires and undercarriage, entering and leaving the farm

- Do not loan or borrow equipment or vehicles from other farms
- Avoid visiting other poultry farms. If farm visits are necessary change footwear and clothing before working with your flock
- Do not bring birds from slaughter channels, especially live-bird markets, back to the farm.

Early reporting is critical to the health and safety of your herd/flock and the future of our industry. Visit the Illinois Department of Agriculture website for more information about avian influenza, including signs of the disease and tips for prevention.

More information:

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/2011/ProtectYourBirdFromAI_Eng.pdf

<https://www.agr.state.il.us/alerts>

<https://www.agr.state.il.us/biosecurity-measures/>

<https://www.agr.state.il.us/premises-identification/>