



## FAST FACTS:

- Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) has been confirmed in states throughout the central and western United States as well as Montana.
- Although avian influenza is a highly contagious disease to domestic poultry, there are no apparent risks to human health at this time.
- It is safe to eat properly handled and cooked poultry products, including meat and eggs.
- Good biosecurity helps keep birds healthy:
  - Sanitize equipment and clothing used around them
  - **Minimize contact with wild birds or other poultry**
  - Control access to poultry pens.
- Monitor your birds closely and contact your veterinarian and the Montana Department of Livestock immediately if you suspect illness at 406-444-2043.

# Additional Information on High Path Avian Influenza (HPAI)

## Background:

In December of 2014, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) was confirmed in British Columbia, Canada. Subsequently, HPAI has been confirmed in wild birds and poultry (backyard and commercial) in more than 10 states in the United States resulting in international trade restrictions on poultry and poultry products.

## About Avian Influenza:

Avian influenza is a highly contagious viral disease of chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, ducks, geese, guinea fowl, and many wild birds. It can be carried in wild waterfowl that display no clinical signs of illness. Contact with infected birds, contaminated objects/equipment, and aerosol (short distances) can spread the virus which is found in feces, saliva, and respiratory secretions.

HPAI can cause high mortality in poultry and game birds. Poultry affected by avian influenza can also show:

- Decreased food consumption, huddling, depression, closed eyes.
- Respiratory signs, such as coughing and sneezing.
- Decreased egg production or misshapen eggs.
- Watery greenish diarrhea, excessive thirst.
- Swollen wattles and combs.

The risk to human health associated with the current outbreaks is considered to be low according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) with no reported cases of human illness. It is safe to eat properly prepared poultry and poultry products. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends that poultry and wild birds are cooked to a temperature of 165 °F.

## Biosecurity Measures:

Owners are encouraged to practice good biosecurity measures:

- Isolate sick animals and contact your veterinarian and the Montana Department of Livestock (MDOL).
- Limit, monitor, and record any movement of people, vehicles, or animals on or off your farm.
- Keep your flock away from wild or migratory birds, especially waterfowl.
- If contact with sick birds is necessary, wear protective clothing (gloves, mask, coveralls, and boots).
- Wash and disinfect items going on and off your farm, such as footwear, vehicles and equipment. Effective disinfectants include: bleach, and brand name products such as Comet bathroom cleanser, Lysol multi-purpose cleaner, Virkon, and Tek-Trol.

## Precautions for Handling Wildlife:

- Do not harvest or handle wild birds that are obviously sick or found dead.
- Wear rubber gloves and wash hands after cleaning game, cleaning bird feeders, or handling game.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke while cleaning game.
- Wash tools and work surfaces used to clean game birds with soap and water.

## Who Can I Contact?

- If you see sickness or increased death loss in poultry, immediately contact **MDOL at 406-444-2043**.
- If you find sick or dead wild birds that have died from unknown causes please contact your local FWP Warden, Biologist or Regional office, or call the FWP wildlife veterinarian (406-994-5671).

## More Information:

- Poultry Manual: Cleaning and Disinfection of Facilities, Equipment, and Vehicles - [www.cfsph.iastate.edu/pdf/fad-prep-nahems-poultry-industry-manual](http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/pdf/fad-prep-nahems-poultry-industry-manual)
- USDA Biosecurity Guide for Poultry and Bird Owners - [www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal\\_health/2014/pub\\_bioguide\\_poultry\\_bird.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/2014/pub_bioguide_poultry_bird.pdf)
- USDA Biosecurity - [www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/birdbiosecurity/](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/birdbiosecurity/)