



Agriculture and Markets

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To New York's Poultry Owners:

The Department of Agriculture and Markets shares your concern about the current outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza that has caused so much devastation in other states. The outbreak has been most severe in the Upper Midwest, especially in Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Nebraska. To date, nearly 50 million birds have either died from this virus or will soon die. While the U.S. Department of Agriculture and state governments in the affected states struggle to contain the outbreak there, work is needed closer to home, too. The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets has been working to build our level of preparedness should the virus come this way, and we've taken measures which we hope will reduce the overall risk for the state. We've enacted emergency regulations that require screening against avian influenza for incoming poultry and we have banned poultry exhibits at our county and state fairs for the 2015 season.

Efforts by government are not enough. Every poultry owner must be conscious of the threat of avian influenza and must take all reasonable efforts to protect his or her flock. We've prepared two fact sheets using information already available from a variety of experts on poultry health. The first sheet is a self-assessment you can use to raise the level of biosecurity on your farm. The second is aimed at visitors to your farm and provides very basic instructions for persons unfamiliar with farming and animal disease prevention. We hope you and others can use it to educate farm visitors and reduce their potential for spreading all types of avian disease, not just highly pathogenic avian influenza.

These fact sheets are available on our website at www.agriculture.ny.gov.

Together, we all must strive to protect avian health in New York and the livelihoods of all who depend on New York's poultry industry.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Ball
Commissioner



2015 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Outbreak: Biosecurity for Poultry Farms: Questions to ask yourself:

1. Do you have footwear disinfection stations, site-provided footwear, or site-provided foot covers available outside all external entrances and is everyone, including visitors/contract workers, required to clean and disinfect their footwear?
2. Are external entrances to chicken houses and the processing plant kept locked during nonbusiness hours?
3. Do you ask everyone entering your farm if they've had **any** kind of avian contact in the past 5 days?
4. Does farm policy require that employees and visitors/contract workers do not own other birds—including pet birds, domestic chickens, fighting chickens, ducks, geese, waterfowl, exotic birds, quail, partridge or pheasants? Do these persons sign a document stating this?
5. Are hand-washing or hand-sanitizing stations available and is everyone, including visitors and contractors, required to wash/sanitize their hands before entering and after leaving poultry houses or egg processing areas?
6. If truck drivers are required to make multiple stops at more than one individual farm in any given day, are they prohibited from entering poultry houses or egg processing areas?
7. Does your farm strongly discourage unnecessary outside visitors? Are biosecurity signs posted warning people not to enter any of the buildings on the premises?
8. Do you have a dedicated parking area for visitors away from poultry housing and work traffic? Is there signage in the parking area to tell visitors how to call for assistance and to stay in their vehicles until they are escorted by management?
9. Does your farm require visitors to wear clean clothes and footwear? Do visitors change into dedicated clothing and boots if possible?
10. Does your farm avoid sharing equipment or supplies with other farms? If tools or equipment must be brought in, are they cleaned and disinfected as they enter?

If you find yourself answering no to these questions, you may need to increase your level of protection!



Biosecurity for Farm Visitors During the 2015 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Outbreak

- Do not enter any farm without permission from the owner or management.
- Whenever possible, make an appointment prior to traveling to the farm.
- Wear clean clothes and shoes on the day of the visit.
- When you arrive, park your vehicle at the end of the farm drive or on the roadside and use your cell phone to notify the owners or managers of your presence and to receive instructions for entry.
- Let farm management know if in the previous 5 days you have been on another poultry farm or if you've had contact with wild birds. Also let management know if you personally own or care for birds or poultry.
- Observe all of the farm's instructions regarding biosecurity procedures.
- Do not enter animal housing areas without express permission from farm management.
- Do not touch animals unless that is part of your tasks on the farm.
- Immediately report anything unusual to farm management, especially sick or dead birds.

Your attention to these precautions is critical to protecting avian health and our farm economy!