



Animal Health and Assurance Branch
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September 14, 2023

From: Dr. Keith Lehman
Chief Provincial Veterinarian

To: Alberta Backyard/Small-Flock Poultry Keepers

Re: Continued Risk of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

Summary:

- **To date in 2023, two cases of HPAI in Alberta have been detected. The first was on April 21st, and the second was just recently on Sept 11th.**
- **In 2022, there were 25 cases identified between September and December. Due to migratory patterns and the recent detection, the possibility of a resurgence of cases in conjunction with the upcoming fall migration is a concern.**
- Primary control zones around infected premises are established by the CFIA. At this time, there is one active primary [control zone](#) in Alberta.
- Migratory wild birds as well as some wild mammalian species have been found to be susceptible to HPAI infection. Click [this link](#) for more information on HPAI in wild birds.
- The virus can survive in the environment for extended periods in the right conditions (e.g. cold, wet conditions).
- Events where poultry from different locations may commingle, such as swaps/sales, auctions, fairs, or shows, carry a risk of transmission of poultry diseases.
- Cases have involved premises with ALL levels of biosecurity. **However, good biosecurity and increased vigilance are still your best defense against HPAI.**

What should you do if you suspect your flock may have HPAI?

**Contact your flock veterinarian and/or
The Office of the Chief Provincial Veterinarian (OCPV): 1-780-427-3448**

The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (AGI) also has an ongoing Non-Quota, Non-Commercial Disease Investigation Poultry Program to help small-flock poultry owners and their veterinarians (for flocks with symptoms that meet specific criteria). Please [click on this link](#) for more information about this program.

For further information on avian influenza in Canada and the latest updates, you can visit the Canadian Food Inspection Agency website at www.inspection.gc.ca/avian-influenza and/or the Government of Alberta website at <https://www.alberta.ca/avian-influenza-reportable.aspx>

What does this mean for backyard/small flock poultry keepers?

Continue to take a pro-active approach to protecting your flock.

- Be aware of your flock's environment and health.
- Think of ways to manage your flock should HPAI cases increase again during fall migration.
- Continue to report signs of illness and sudden deaths in your flock to your flock veterinarian and/or the OCPV.

Increased biosecurity is still your best defense (against ALL poultry diseases).

- Continue to be mindful about the visitors you choose to allow near your flock.
- Avoid visiting other premises that keep poultry.
- Ensure that your feed and water sources are not accessible to wild birds/animals.
- Have a separate coop at least 30 feet from your main coop. House and monitor new additions there for a minimum of 30 days before introducing them to your flock.
- Have dedicated footwear and dedicated clothing for accessing your coop. Do not wear these outside your coop/run. Keep them separate from your other footwear/clothing.
- Consider the risk of free ranging the flock, and if possible, keep your flock indoors during the fall migration.
- Wash hands before and after attending to any poultry.
- Maintain effective biosecurity between birds and swine. Swine can be infected with avian and human influenza strains, which increases the risk to both poultry and public health.

Premises Identification (PID) Program

You have received this update because you are a poultry owner who has registered your land location in Alberta's Premises Identification (PID) Program. It is important that your information in the system is accurate and up to date in order to ensure effective and timely communication. To check if your information (e.g. contact information, location, species listed at the location etc.) is current or if you would like to make a change, please visit our traceability website at <https://www.alberta.ca/register-with-the-animal-premises-identification-program.aspx> or call the Alberta Ag-Info Centre toll-free at 310-FARM (3276).

If you have questions regarding this notice, please contact the Office of the Chief Provincial Veterinarian by email at chief.prov.vet@gov.ab.ca or by telephone at 780-427-3448.