



January 6, 2015

Dear County Agricultural Commissioners:

Due to recent findings over the past month of High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) serotypes H5N2 and H5N8 detected in British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon, there has been growing concern over the health of the bird populations in California. Surveillance has been increased in both wild bird and poultry populations. Just this past week, H5N8 was confirmed in a wild duck in Butte County.

It is important to note that the detected HPAI strains are not a risk to human health and have not been found in commercial poultry in the United States—but we need to be proactive to make sure this does not become a problem.

Avian Influenza, commonly called bird flu, is a disease found in a wide variety of domesticated and wild birds. Cases are classified as either low pathogenicity or high pathogenicity based on the severity of the illness they cause in poultry. However, influenza viruses can genetically change to more (or less) severe types. Once introduced into an area, infection can spread through bird-to-bird contact or through contact with contaminated people, feed, water, or equipment.

Our mission is to reach out to commercial and backyard flocks all over California to emphasize that biosecurity is absolutely necessary and crucial during this time. Poultry should be kept separate from wild birds and monitored for signs of illness or increased mortality. Our Sick Bird Hotline (866-922-2473) should be utilized if there are any concerns. We appreciate you providing this information to poultry owners.

Please help us spread the word and keep avian influenza out of our domestic poultry flocks.

For more information, please visit our web page at:

http://www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/Avian_Influenza.html

Sincerely,

Annette Jones, D.V.M.
State Veterinarian





Highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N8) was recently detected in migrating waterfowl in Butte County, California. Fortunately, this strain does not infect humans. However, commercial and backyard poultry raised near areas commonly used by migrating waterfowl are at risk.

Waterfowl are reservoirs for Avian Influenza (AI) strains. Some of these strains can be fatal to domestic poultry, yet show little to no signs in waterfowl.

Because many waterfowl species migrate in the fall and spring crossing many borders, the risk of transmission of AI to backyard and commercial poultry increases during this time. During migration periods, one should consider the risks waterfowl pose and what can be done to reduce these risks:

- One high risk practice is having a pond or other body of water that can attract waterfowl to or near your facility. Discourage the use of such ponds by waterfowl.
- Consider draining ponds if feasible. Avoid on-farm traffic patterns that cross waterways.
- Provide housing to confine domestic poultry and/or enclose an exercise area with netting.
- Avoid use of water that comes from sources where waterfowl may congregate during migration.
- Ideally, producers and employees should avoid waterfowl hunting during migration. Otherwise, ensure clothing, footwear, vehicles, etc. used during hunts are laundered and/or disinfected.



Other biosecurity practices that can reduce the risk of AI transmission include:

- Permitting only essential workers and vehicles on the premises
- Providing disposable coveralls, boots and head coverings for visitors
- Thoroughly cleaning and disinfecting vehicles and equipment entering or leaving the premises
- Avoiding visits to other poultry operations
- Prohibiting employees from owning or associating with other birds for any purposes
- Providing biosecurity training to employees
- Protecting flocks from exposure to wild birds, rodents and insects
- Controlling movement associated with the disposal of mortality, litter and manure

If you observe signs of illness or increased mortality in your flock, please call your private veterinarian, the Sick Bird Hotline at 866-922-2473, or one of the District Office/USDA Numbers below:

Contact Information	
CDFA Sacramento (HQ)	(916) 900-5002
CDFA Modesto District	(209) 491-9350
CDFA Ontario District	(909) 947-4462
CDFA Redding District	(530) 225-2140
CDFA Tulare District	(559) 685-3500
USDA-VS Toll Free	(877) 741-3690



California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory Necropsy Services for Backyard Poultry Owners



The California Animal Health and Food Safety (CAHFS) Laboratory System is the backbone of California's warning system that helps to protect the health of California's livestock and poultry. CAHFS serves the people of California by safeguarding the public health with rapid and reliable diagnoses for animal diseases affecting humans. CAHFS operates in partnership with the CDFA, UC Davis, livestock and poultry producers, and California Veterinarians.

Veterinarians and Owners of Backyard Poultry are encouraged to submit sick or recently dead birds for necropsy (postmortem) examination

- **Standard diagnostic work for one or two birds per submission is performed at **no charge*** to the owner.**
- The necropsy service is available to California backyard flock owners of fewer than 1,000 birds (chicken, turkeys, waterfowl, and squabs). *Free service does not include pet birds, game birds, or racing pigeons.*
- If submitting a recently dead bird(s), carcass(es) must be kept cold (in a cooler or equivalent).
- Submission form must be included at time of submission. Submission form, guidelines, and shipping instructions can be found at: http://cahfs.ucdavis.edu/submission_forms/index.cfm
- This program assists with the State's surveillance program to monitor and detect immediate threats of disease.
- The Information obtained from the diagnostic work is invaluable for monitoring the spread of disease.

**If delivered by mail, shipping and handling costs are at the owner's expense.*

For more information contact a local CAHFS laboratory or CDFA:

CAHFS - Davis Laboratory

University of California
620 W. Health Sciences Dr.
Davis, CA 95616
Phone: (530) 752-8700
cahfsdavis@cahfs.ucdavis.edu

CAHFS - Tulare Laboratory

18830 Road 112
Tulare, CA
93274
Phone: (559) 688-7543
cahfstulare@cahfs.ucdavis.edu

CAHFS - San Bernardino Laboratory

105 W. Central Avenue
San Bernardino, CA
92408
Phone: (909) 383-4287
cahfsanbernardino@cahfs.ucdavis.edu

CAHFS - Turlock Laboratory

1550 North Soderquist Rd.
Turlock, CA
95380
Phone: (209) 634-5837
cahfsturlock@cahfs.ucdavis.edu



Other Contact Information	
CDFA Sacramento (HQ)	(916) 900-5002
CDFA Modesto District	(209) 491-9350
CDFA Ontario District	(909) 947-4462
CDFA Redding District	(530) 225-2140
CDFA Tulare District	(559) 685-3500
USDA-VS Toll Free	(877) 741-3690
Sick Bird Hotline	(866) 922-2473
CDFW Wildlife Program	(916) 928-5845



For more information, visit the following Web sites at: <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/ah> and <http://www.cahfs.ucdavis.edu/>.
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