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INDIANA STATE BOARD OF ANIMAL HEALTH

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Indiana Limits Bird Movements to Protect Against Avian Influenza

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INDIANAPOLIS (27 May 2015)—To protect Indiana’s poultry from potential exposure to H5 avian influenza virus, the members of the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) have ceased all bird movements to events in the state that allow commingling of birds from different locations. This includes shows, exhibitions and public sales (such as flea markets, swap meets, sale barns). This prohibition will stand until further notice, likely through the end of 2015.

The action does not apply to private sales between individuals.

“This was not a decision made lightly,” said Indiana State Veterinarian Bret D. Marsh, DVM. “The spread of the H5 viruses has been unprecedented, and our goal is to protect the health of small, backyard poultry flocks as much as our commercial industry from this disease.”

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), while deadly to domestic poultry, does not present a food safety threat. Further, the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention has stated the virus poses little risk to human health.

Sixteen states, primarily in the Upper Midwest, have had diagnosed cases of HPAI, resulting in the deaths of more than 40 million birds. Indiana had a single, backyard flock diagnosed earlier this month.

Dr. Marsh explained that BOAH plans to open a public comment opportunity in June to receive input from poultry owners and others about strategies to reopen public shows and sales. “We are looking for ways to restore our public bird events in a way that will reduce or eliminate opportunities for disease to spread and threaten backyard flocks statewide.

Poultry owners who notice illness in their birds consistent with avian influenza are encouraged to call the Healthy Birds Hotline at 866-536-7593 to speak with a state or federal veterinarian.

Hoosiers who notice five or more dead feeder-type wild birds should contact the Indiana Department of Natural Resources at 812-334-1137.

More information about Indiana’s response to HPAI is online at: www.in.gov/boah/2390.htm .

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