



Michael R. Pence, Governor
Bret D. Marsh, DVM, State Veterinarian

INDIANA STATE BOARD OF ANIMAL HEALTH

Office of the State Veterinarian
Discovery Hall, Suite 100
1202 East 38th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46205-2898
Phone: 317/544-2400

ANIMAL HEALTH ADVISORY

High-Path Avian Influenza Diagnosed in Indiana: Backyard Bird Owners Should Be Alert For Signs of Disease

(11 May 2015)

Birds from a Whitley County, Indiana backyard (hobby) poultry flock have tested positive for highly pathogenic H5N8 avian influenza.

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) causes severe illness and/or death in some poultry species and can be spread by wild birds, particularly migratory waterfowl.

Poultry owners in a 10 km (6.2-mile) radius around the infected flock are being contacted to raise awareness and verify that the disease has not spread. All the birds on the infected site have been removed, so the original infected flock no longer presents a disease threat.

This Advisory offers guidance for backyard bird owners to recognize and report signs of disease.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Essential points to note about the current ongoing HPAI disease event:

1. The food supply is safe. All shipments of poultry and eggs are tested to ensure the absence of avian influenza (AI) before moving into the food supply.
2. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has stated that the risk of transmission to humans is low. The strains of HPAI that are currently circulating in North America have no history of causing human illness.
3. Poultry owners should practice good biosecurity. This includes minimizing or eliminating exposure the poultry has to wild birds and their droppings.

SURVEILLANCE & REPORTING

BACKYARD FLOCKS

Owners of small/backyard poultry flocks can help aid in general surveillance by reporting any unusual deaths or illness indicative of HPAI within the flock. Reports should be made to the **USDA Healthy Birds Hotline: 866-536-7593**. Callers will be routed to a federal or state veterinarian in Indiana for case assessment. Dead birds should be double-bagged and refrigerated for possible testing.

Birds affected with HPAI may show one or more of the following signs:

- Sudden death without clinical signs
- Lack of energy and appetite
- Decreased egg production
- Soft-shelled or misshapen eggs
- Swelling of the head, eyelids, comb, wattles, and hocks

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- Purple discoloration of the wattles, combs, and legs
- Nasal discharge
- Coughing, sneezing
- Incoordination
- Diarrhea

A great resource for backyard bird health information is online at: www.healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov

WILD BIRDS

HPAI has been found primarily in wild migratory waterfowl (ducks, geese, etc.). Many of these species are currently migrating, with warmer temperatures. The virus is shed in their feces; therefore, bodies of water and resting areas could be sources of infection. Wild waterfowl present the biggest threat, because they do not appear sick or die from the disease. Other bird species may also carry the disease. Backyard poultry owners are encouraged to take steps to minimize their birds' contact with wild bird species.

Hoosiers who notice unusual wild bird deaths (that is: 5 or more feeder-type bird deaths in close proximity) should report them to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) at: **812-334-1137**. The DNR wild bird biologists will make a determination about collecting the dead birds for surveillance testing.

SITUATION UPDATES & NOTIFICATIONS

The Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH), in cooperation with U.S. Department of Agriculture Veterinary Services (USDA-VS), is the official reporting agency for HPAI. A webpage has been established to provide situation updates, as needed, regarding the identification of HPAI in the state. **Updates will be online at:** www.in.gov/boah/2390.htm . A link on that page will allow anyone to sign up to receive email notices when updates are posted. Please subscribe and/or encourage others to do so.

INTERSTATE MOVEMENTS

Movements of eggs, semen, live birds (including exotics and pets), bird carcasses, and poultry products (including byproducts such as feathers and manure) from HPAI control areas into Indiana must meet all entry requirements (<http://in.gov/boah/2391.htm>) and be accompanied by a pre-approved permit. Permits must be obtained from the State Veterinarian of the state-of-origin after specific testing and/or biosecurity requirements are met. More details are online at www.in.gov/boah/2390.htm .

MORE INFORMATION

More information about HPAI, as well as preparedness and planning efforts, is online at: www.in.gov/boah/2390.htm

The Board of Animal Health may be found online at: www.boah.in.gov; on social media at: www.facebook.com/INBOAH and Twitter at: @INBOAH.

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