HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA CONFIRMED
IN MONMOUTH COUNTY POULTRY FLOCK
First 2022 HPAI case in New Jersey

(TRENTON) – The United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) confirmed the state's first Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza case in a Monmouth County non-commercial backyard poultry flock. The disease response is being coordinated between state and federal partners.

The test samples were collected from a duck and chicken flock in Monmouth County and were tested at the New Jersey Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory. The duck flock had experienced high mortality, and some displayed neurologic signs before succumbing to the disease. Congruent testing was completed at the National Veterinary Services Laboratory, which confirmed detection of the disease on May 17, 2022.

State and federal personnel are following the appropriate response plan, including implementing site quarantine, proper biosecurity measures, and depopulation of poultry on the premises. Additionally, outreach to poultry owners, live bird markets, and the general public at www.nj.gov/agriculture has been completed to provide recommendations on poultry management and measures to ensure the maintenance of a healthy flock.

HPAI is highly contagious and often fatal in domestic poultry species. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the recent HPAI detections in birds do not present an immediate public health concern. As a reminder, poultry and eggs’ proper handling and cooking to an internal temperature of 165 °F kill bacteria and viruses.

Signs of HPAI in poultry can include:
- Sudden death
- Decrease in feed or water consumption
- Respiratory signs such as coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge
- Swelling around the eyes
- Open-mouth breathing
- Darkening of the comb/wattles
- Reddening of the shanks or feet
- Decreased egg production
- Lethargy

HPAI spreads through contact with bodily secretions, including feces, ocular, nasal, or oral secretions from infected birds. The virus can spread on vehicles, equipment, shoes, etc. Practicing good biosecurity can help prevent the spread of HPAI onto a farm.
Those biosecurity practices include:

- Eliminating exposure of domestic birds to wild birds. Minimizing standing water and extra feed in the environment that might attract wild birds.
- Avoiding contact with other poultry.
- Keeping a specific set of shoes and clothing for tending to poultry. Disposable boot covers or a foot bath that is changed regularly are other measures that can be used.
- Minimizing the number of people who visit the birds.
- Avoiding sharing equipment with other flocks and using appropriate disinfectants for equipment that must come onto a farm.

HPAI is a reportable disease. Any individual who shall gain knowledge or suspect the existence of the disease shall notify this office without delay. Deceased birds suspected of having Avian Influenza should be double-bagged and stored appropriately for testing. Do not expose dead poultry to the environment, other poultry, or wildlife/wild birds. Wash your hands after handling sick or dead birds.

If you suspect HPAI, please alert the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, Division of Animal Health at 609-671-6400.

For additional information about the disease and outreach materials, go to:

- [https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/ah/](https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/ah/)

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