



Animal Health and Assurance Branch
Office of the Chief Provincial Veterinarian
#912 OS Longman Building
6909 – 116 Street
Edmonton, AB T6H 4P2
Telephone: 780-427-3448
Fax: 780-415-0810
www.alberta.ca/animal-health.aspx

November 13, 2024

From: Dr. Keith Lehman
Chief Provincial Veterinarian

To: Alberta Backyard/Small-Flock Poultry Keepers

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

Summary:

- **While spring of 2024 was relatively quiet Alberta with only two cases in February, we have seen an additional two cases in the past week and BC has seen a significant number of cases. The last two cases were confirmed on November 8th (small flock) and 12th (commercial).**
- **In 2023, there were 19 cases identified between September and December. That historical bias towards fall coupled with the recent detections suggests the possibility of a resurgence of risk in conjunction with the ongoing migration this fall.**
- Primary control zones around infected premises are established by the CFIA. Please visit the following links for [updates on current cases](#) and a [map outlining control zones](#) where permits may be required.
- Migratory wild birds as well as some wild and domestic 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). The virus often survives for longer in the environment during winter.
- 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 [Here](#) and/or the Government of Alberta website [Here](#).

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 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.