



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES COMMISSIONER ADAM H. PUTNAM

Avian Influenza Update

March 28, 2017

Avian Influenza (HPAI or LPAI) has NOT been found in Florida poultry.

Currently, Avian Influenza (AI) has been detected in Tennessee (HPAI and LPAI), Alabama (LPAI), Georgia (LPAI), Kentucky (LPAI), and Wisconsin (LPAI). For more information on the current situation, visit the USDA website at [USDA avian influenza](http://www.usda.gov/avian-influenza).

Due to the recent AI findings, it is recommended that Florida poultry producers and enthusiasts (commercial and backyard) take the following precautions to minimize the risk of introduction of influenza into our Florida poultry flocks.

1. Implement STRICT BIOSECURITY on all poultry premises. Alert all company personnel, growers, farmworkers and service personnel of the increased risk of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). Focus biosecurity methods on preventing any exposure to wild waterfowl or their droppings. Keep current biosecurity AT ALL TIMES, especially relating to ESSENTIAL visitors and ENTRY biosecurity.
2. Avoid any contact with wild birds of any kind, especially waterfowl, their habitat, or their droppings.
3. If you use rendering for dead poultry disposal, please verify that the trucks are disinfected at each pickup and that the freezer area is kept clean and clutter free. If you use rendering pickup for livestock, maintain the same clean and clutter-free area. If you visit a rendering plant for any livestock, clean and disinfect your vehicle before returning to your farm.
4. Take the necessary precautions around any congregation points for growers or backyard owners – do not bring disease back to your poultry flock.
5. Monitor all flocks for increased mortality or clinical signs consistent with Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), and report any concerns immediately. To date, the consistent clinical sign in all the current reported cases has been a marked, rapid increase in mortality over several days.
6. Enroll in the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP).
7. Consider making a contingency plan for moving outdoor poultry into bio-secure housing.

If you have any questions, please contact the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry, at (850) 410-0900 or for Florida residents, 1-877-815-0034. Please visit our website for any additional information regarding Avian Influenza and the requirements for moving poultry into the state at www.FreshFromFlorida.com/AvianInfluenza.

CURRENT EVENTS:

- March 4, 2017, HPAI (H7N9) was confirmed in one commercial broiler breeder flock in Lincoln County, Tennessee.
- March 7, 2017 LPAI (H5N2) was confirmed in commercial turkeys in Barron County, Wisconsin.
- March 9, 2017, LPAI (H7N9) was confirmed in one commercial broiler breeder flock in Giles County, Tennessee.
- March 15, 2017, LPAI (H7N9) was confirmed on three separate premises. One broiler breeder flock located in Lauderdale County, one backyard flock in Madison County, and one backyard flock in Jackson County. All three counties are in northern Alabama.
- March 16, 2017, HPAI (H7N9) was confirmed in a second commercial broiler breeder flock in Lincoln County, Tennessee. This premises is located less than two miles away and in the same control zone as the March 5, 2017, HPAI premises in Lincoln County, Tennessee. The infected poultry were depopulated and surveillance is ongoing.
- March 20, 2017, LPAI (H7N9) was confirmed in one commercial broiler breeder flock from Christian County in western Kentucky. The flock of 22,000 hens was depopulated as a precautionary measure.
- March 21, 2017, LPAI (H7N9) was confirmed in one commercial broiler breeder flock from Pickens County in western Alabama.
- March 22, 2017, LPAI (H7N9) was confirmed in one commercial broiler breeder flock in Cullman County in northern Alabama.
- March 22, 2017, LPAI (H7N9) was confirmed in one commercial broiler breeder flock in Lauderdale County in northern Alabama.
- March 27, 2017 LPAI (H7N9) was confirmed in one broiler breeder flock in Chattooga County in northwestern Georgia.

It is important to note that both the HPAI H7N9 and the LPAI H7N9 confirmed in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, and Tennessee are of North American wild bird origin and **NOT** related to the Asian H7N9 virus. While the subtype is the same as the China H7N9 lineage that emerged in 2013, this is a different virus and genetically distinct from the China H7N9 lineage.

Both HPAI and LPAI Avian Influenza do **NOT** present a food safety concern. All commercial poultry are tested prior to going to market. No affected commercial poultry will enter the food chain. While backyard poultry may not be tested prior to processing, proper handling and cooking of poultry will destroy the virus. The risk of human infection with Avian Influenza during poultry outbreaks is very low.

BACKGROUND:

Avian Influenza viruses are classified by proteins of the virus: “H” proteins, of which there are 16 (H1–H16), and “N” proteins, of which there are nine (N1–N9). Many different combinations of “H” and “N” proteins are possible. Like all influenza viruses, Avian Influenza viruses are known to easily re-assort and mutate (to change) into new Avian Influenza subtypes. They can even change in their ability to infect within a subtype. Only H7 and H5 subtypes have been found to change from LPAI to HPAI.

Avian Influenza (LPAI) normally resides in the North American wild bird population. Wild waterfowl (ducks, geese, and shorebirds) are known to be carriers of the virus. They do not get sick, but spread it wherever they go. Any contact with wild birds of any kind, especially waterfowl, their habitat or their droppings, should be avoided. The virus is shed in the droppings and by direct contact.

Florida is associated with both the Mississippi and Atlantic migratory flyways. In 2014 and 2015, Highly Pathogenic H5N8 and H5N2 caused the largest animal disease outbreak in United States history. This outbreak affected both commercial and backyard poultry. The outbreak affected 21 states, caused over 50 million bird deaths, and cost an estimated \$3 billion economic impact. This outbreak was caused by an Asian lineage avian HPAI virus brought by wild waterfowl from Asia. The virus re-assorted with a North American subtype to produce HPAI in the USA. Factors involved with the spread of the virus included wild waterfowl migration and breakdowns in biosecurity.

In 2016, HPAI, H7N8, and LPAI, H7N8 infected several premises in Indiana and caused the loss of 43,000 commercial poultry. The viruses were identified as North American origin. It is thought that the LPAI, H7N8 mutated into HPAI, H7N8.