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## HEIGHTENED BIOSECURITY PROTOCOLS ENACTED INVOLVING DELAWARE POULTRY FARMS

### Current Situation

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has confirmed highly pathogenic Eurasian H5 avian influenza (HPAI) in three wild birds in Kent County, Delaware. These birds, including one American wigeon and two Northern shovelers, were hunter-harvested and submitted for sampling.

These findings are not unexpected, as wild birds can be infected with HPAI and show no signs of illness. Five other states in the Atlantic Flyway have detected HPAI in wild birds. Wild free-flying ducks, geese, and shorebirds can carry the disease to new areas when migrating.

### Heighten Biosecurity Guidance

With the detection of HPAI in Delaware's wild bird population, along with the recent detection of HPAI in a commercial turkey flock in Indiana, the Delaware Department of Agriculture is issuing the following guidance to protect all poultry – commercial and backyard flocks alike – from potential infection by avian influenza.

- No person without a direct role in the poultry operation (e.g., feed trucks, fuel deliveries, service people ) should visit poultry farms for the foreseeable future. Local, county, and state governments, as well as allied industries, should cease non-essential visits to poultry farms.
- Commercial and backyard flock owners should review their biosecurity plans to reduce the transmission of avian influenza to their birds. Virus transmission can occur through foot and vehicular traffic; secretions from birds' mouths, nostrils, eyes, excrement; contact with infected droppings; movement of infected birds; and contaminated clothing and equipment. For tips on improving biosecurity, visit <https://bit.ly/3Bh6T7p>
- All keepers of domesticated birds should prevent contact between their animals and areas where wild birds have access.
- Report sick poultry or unusual deaths in poultry flocks to the Delaware Department of Agriculture's Poultry and Animal Health at (302) 698-4507 or via email at [Poultry.Health@delaware.gov](mailto:Poultry.Health@delaware.gov).

### Additional Background

Avian influenza (AI) is caused by influenza type A virus which can infect poultry (such as chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, domestic ducks, geese, and guinea fowl) and is carried by free flying waterfowl such as ducks, geese, and shorebirds. For more information on avian influenza, visit <https://de.gov/poultry>.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention considers the risk to the general public from HPAI H5 infections to be low. No human infections with Eurasian H5 viruses have occurred in the United States. As a reminder, the proper handling and cooking of poultry and eggs to an internal temperature of 165°F kill bacteria and viruses, including HPAI.