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HEIGHTENED BIOSECURITY PROTOCOLS REVISED INVOLVING DELAWARE POULTRY FARMS

Current Situation

Since the last case of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) was confirmed on March 18, no further cases of HPAI have been identified in the State of Delaware, and all control areas will be released; therefore, beginning on June 1, 2022, the following heightened biosecurity guidance *is no longer in place*:

- 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.

After visiting a poultry farm, consider changing shoes and cleaning all organic material off your dirty shoes before using them again. You can spray the bottoms of the shoes with a common household cleaner such as Lysol™ or dilute bleach spray to kill the virus so if present in the environment, it is not spread to other poultry farms.

With ongoing detections of HPAI in the wild bird population on Delmarva, especially black vultures, the following **guidance is still in place**:

- 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, and 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.

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 wild birds such as ducks, geese, raptors, and shorebirds. For more information on avian influenza, visit <https://de.gov/poultry>.

Even with the ongoing detections of HPAI in poultry and wild birds in the United States, continuing testing of people in close contact with infected poultry indicates a low risk to the general public's health. This H5N1 virus has not shown an ability to infect and be transmitted between people. Avian influenza does not affect poultry meat or egg products, which remain safe to eat. Properly cooking poultry and eggs to 165 degrees Fahrenheit will kill viruses or bacteria.