



FAST FACTS:

- Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) has been confirmed in states throughout the central and western United States as well as Montana.
- Although avian influenza is a highly contagious disease to domestic poultry, there are no apparent risks to human health at this time.
- It is safe to eat properly handled and cooked poultry products, including meat and eggs.
- Good biosecurity helps keep birds healthy:
 - **Minimize contact with wild birds or other poultry**
 - Sanitize equipment and clothing used around them
 - Control access to poultry pens.
- Monitor your birds closely and contact your veterinarian and the Montana Department of Livestock immediately if you suspect illness at 406-444-2976.

Additional Information on High Path Avian Influenza (HPAI)

Background:

In January of 2022, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) was confirmed in wild birds in South Carolina, and in February the first case of HPAI in domestic poultry was confirmed in Indiana. Subsequently, HPAI has been confirmed in wild birds and poultry (backyard and commercial) in more than 25 states in the United States resulting in international trade restrictions on poultry and poultry products. Montana's first confirmed case was announced April 8.

About Avian Influenza:

Avian influenza is a highly contagious viral disease of chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, ducks, geese, guinea fowl, and many wild birds. It can be carried in wild waterfowl that display no clinical signs of illness. Contact with infected birds, contaminated objects/equipment, and aerosol (short distances) can spread the virus which is found in feces, saliva, and respiratory secretions.

HPAI can cause high mortality in poultry and game birds. Poultry affected by avian influenza can also show:

- Decreased food consumption, huddling, depression, closed eyes.
- Respiratory signs, such as coughing and sneezing.
- Decreased egg production or misshapen eggs.
- Watery greenish diarrhea, excessive thirst.
- Swollen wattles and combs.

The risk to human health associated with the current outbreaks is considered to be low according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) with no reported cases of human illness. It is safe to eat properly prepared poultry and poultry products. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends that poultry and wild birds are cooked to a temperature of 165 °F.

Biosecurity Measures:

Owners are encouraged to practice good biosecurity measures:

- Prevent contact between wild or migratory birds and domestic poultry, including access by wild birds to feed and water sources.
- House birds indoors to the extent possible to limit exposure to wild or migratory birds.
- Limit visitor access to areas where birds are housed.
- Use dedicated clothing and protective footwear when caring for domestic poultry.
- Wash and disinfect items going on and off your farm, such as footwear, vehicles, and equipment. Effective disinfectants include bleach, Comet bathroom cleanser, Lysol multi-purpose cleaner, Virkon, and Tek-Trol.
- Isolate sick animals and contact your veterinarian or Montana Department of Livestock (MDOL).

Who Can I Contact?

- If you see sickness or increased death loss in poultry, immediately contact **MDOL at 406-444-2976**.
- If you find sick or dead wild birds that have died from unknown causes, please contact your local FWP Warden, Biologist or Regional office, or call the **FWP wildlife veterinarian at 406-577-7880**.

More Information:

- Biosecurity - <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program>
- Human health and HPAI - <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/avian-flu-summary.htm>
- Poultry Manual: Cleaning and Disinfection of Facilities, Equipment, and Vehicles - www.cfsph.iastate.edu/pdf/fad-prep-nahems-poultry-industry-manual
- 2022 Detections of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza- <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/avian-influenza/2022-hpai>