

Poultry Biosecurity and the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

The following is from the Ohio Poultry Association Newsletter from November 2023.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) has been detected in a commercial layer flock in Union County, Ohio. The non-negative result was confirmed by the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS). The samples were first tested at the Ohio Department of Agriculture's Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory and confirmed at the APHIS National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa.

HPAI is a highly contagious virus that spreads quickly and can be fatal to flocks and devastating to poultry owners, both commercial and non-commercial. HPAI 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.

New detections continue to be confirmed this fall in both backyard and commercial cases around the country. This is the first detection in Ohio for 2023. Visit USDA's Confirmed Detections website to stay up to date on all HPAI confirmed cases.

State officials quarantined the affected premise, and birds on the property will be depopulated to prevent the spread of the disease. Federal and State partners are working jointly on additional surveillance and testing in areas around the affected flocks. Surveillance activities will be conducted in a 20-kilometer zone around the infected premises.

The recent HPAI detection does not present an immediate public health concern, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. No human cases have been detected in the United States. According to USDA, HPAI cannot be transmitted through properly cooked meats or eggs. Products from any HPAI-affected flocks are prohibited from entering the food system. As a reminder, the proper handling and cooking of all poultry and eggs to an internal temperature of 165 F is recommended as a general food safety precaution.

The best defense against HPAI is vigilant disease prevention. Biosecurity and best management practices include:

- Prevent contact with wild birds and waterfowl. Keep birds indoors when possible.
- Keep visitors to essential personnel only. Only allow those who care for your poultry to have contact with them and make sure they follow biosecurity principles.
- Wash your hands before and after contact with live poultry. Use soap and water. If using a hand sanitizer, first remove manure, feathers, and other materials from your hands.
- Provide disposable boot covers (preferred) and/or disinfectant footbaths for anyone having contact with your flock. If using a footbath, remove all droppings, mud or debris from boots and shoes using a long-handled brush BEFORE stepping in. Always keep it clean.
- Establish a rodent and pest control program. Deliver, store, and maintain feed, ingredients, bedding, and litter to limit exposure to and contamination from wild animals.

- Use drinking water sourced from a contained supply (well or municipal system). Do not use surface water for drinking or cleaning.
- Clean and disinfect tools and equipment before moving them to a new poultry facility. Trucks, tractors, tools, and equipment should be cleaned and disinfected prior to entering or exiting the property. Do not move or reuse anything that cannot be cleaned.
- Look for signs of illness. Monitor egg production and death loss, discoloration and/or swelling of legs, wattles and combs, labored breathing, reduced feed/water consumption.

Report sick birds immediately to the Ohio Department of Agriculture by calling (614) 728-6220.

As always, if you have any questions regarding biosecurity for your livestock, feel free to reach out to the local extension office and we will be happy to assist.

Upcoming Events & Reminders

BEEF 509 is an educational program sponsored by the beef checkoff and the Ohio Beef Council (OBC) in partnership with the Ohio State University Department of Animal Sciences and OSU Extension. This event is February 23-24th. Topics include live cattle evaluation, beef carcass grading, grid pricing, beef harvest demonstration, science of beef, and more.

BEEF 509- Registration is \$175 per person with the beef council covering all additional program expenses. A maximum of 30 program spaces are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The program will be held at the OSU Animal Sciences Building located at 2029 Fyffe Road, Columbus, Ohio 43210. The registration deadline is January 3, 2024. Registration and additional information are available at ohiocattle.org or by calling 614-873-6736 or email at cattle@ohiocattle.org.

Women In Ag Webinars- December 13th from 10:30-11:30 via Zoom. Registration is free. Topic is on Marketing for your Farm Business. Learn how to use your marketing resources to ensure you are communicating the 'right' message to attract the 'right' customers for your farm business. Register for each month's Women in Ag Webinar at <https://go.osu.edu/wiawednesdaywebinars2023>

Pesticide Exam Dates for the winter- The examinations will take place at 10:00 am at the Ohio Valley Career & Technical Center on December 6th, January 10th, February 7th, and March 6th.