

Wyoming Livestock Board
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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Confirmed in Hot Springs County Backyard Poultry Flock

The Wyoming Livestock Board (WLSB) and USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) confirmed the presence of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in a Hot Springs County backyard poultry flock. Samples from flock were tested at the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory, part of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network, and confirmed at the APHIS National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa. The affected premises was placed under quarantine to prevent further exposure to HPAI. HPAI is considered low risk to human health according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, but is highly contagious to other birds, including commercial and backyard poultry flocks.

Avian influenza is an infectious viral disease of birds that causes high mortality rates in domestic flocks. Migratory waterfowl are the primary source for avian influenza. Wild birds can be infected and appear healthy but shed virus in feces, saliva, and respiratory secretions. Domestic poultry become infected through direct contact with infected wild birds, or through contact with contaminated objects, equipment, or the environment.

“Backyard poultry flock owners face an increased risk of exposure to HPAI if they live near lakes, rivers, canals, or ponds, essentially any body of water that may attract wild waterfowl such as geese and wild ducks,” noted WLSB Assistant State Veterinarian, Dr. Rose Digianantonio. “Flock owners in areas with bodies of water should be vigilant in maintaining separation of their poultry from wild waterfowl, especially during migratory seasons.”

Attentively monitor your birds for symptoms of HPAI, including: sudden death of multiple birds, coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge, lack of energy and appetite, decreased water consumption, decreased egg production, incoordination, and diarrhea. Avian influenza can cause sudden death in birds even if they aren't showing other symptoms.

If these symptoms are observed in your birds, immediately contact your veterinarian, and report sick domestic birds to WLSB, 307-777-7515.

Sick or dead wild birds may be reported to the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) by calling (307) 745-5865 or reporting online. You can also report to your nearest WGFD regional office.

People should avoid contact with sick/dead poultry or wildlife. If contact occurs, wash your hands and change your clothing before having any contact with poultry and wild birds. For information on biosecurity measures, visit healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov.

More information about HPAI detections can be found at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-detections>.

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