



Wyoming Livestock Board

"To represent and serve Wyoming's livestock industry through protecting livestock health and verifying livestock ownership."

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October 19, 2022

Avian Influenza Reported in Fremont County Backyard Flock

On Tuesday, October 11, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) was diagnosed in a mixed-species backyard poultry flock in Fremont County, Wyoming. Samples 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 (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa. This is the first detection of HPAI in a Wyoming domestic backyard poultry flock since May, 2022.

Avian influenza is an infectious viral disease of birds that can cause 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. Attentively monitor your birds for symptoms of HPAI which include: coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge, and other signs of respiratory distress; lack of energy and appetite; decreased water consumption; decreased egg production and/or soft-shelled, misshapen eggs; incoordination; and diarrhea. Avian influenza can also cause sudden death in birds even if they aren't showing other symptoms.

Affected flocks are placed under quarantine and required to be depopulated to prevent further exposure to avian influenza. A surveillance zone has been established to conduct disease surveillance and provide educational resources. Improving flock biosecurity is the best prevention for exposure to avian influenza. Domestic poultry should not be allowed contact with wild waterfowl. As Wyoming's fall bird migration is currently underway, domestic poultry are at a higher risk of exposure, especially if located near canals, ponds, rivers, or other bodies of water.

Anyone involved with poultry production from the small backyard chicken owner to the large commercial producer should review their biosecurity activities to assure the health of their birds. Find guidance on biosecurity as well as updates on the current status of HPAI on the APHIS website: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/avian-influenza/2022-hpai>.

If these symptoms are observed in your birds, immediately contact your veterinarian. If you don't have a regular veterinarian, contact the WLSB, 307-777-8270. You may also report sick birds or unusual bird deaths through APHIS' toll-free number at 1-866-536-7593.

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According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the recent HPAI detections do not present an immediate public health concern. Birds and eggs from the infected flock will not enter 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. For more information about HPAI in Wyoming, please contact the WLSB at 307.777.7515, or visit our website, <https://wlsb.state.wy.us/public>.

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