



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Butler County
General Health District

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Detected in Butler County

November 9, 2022

HAMILTON, Ohio (November 8, 2022) – Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N1 has been detected in a backyard poultry flock in Butler County. The positive detection 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.

Butler County General Health District (BCGHD) is working closely with the Ohio Department of Agriculture, the Ohio Department of Health, and other local partners in this ongoing investigation.

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.

As of November 8th 2022, State officials quarantined the affected premises, and birds on the properties will be depopulated to prevent the spread of the disease.

This recent HPAI H5N1 detection does not present an immediate public health concern to the residents of Butler County or neighboring areas. As of today, there has only been one known human case to have been detected in the entire United States dating back to May of 2022.

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.

According to the Ohio Department of Agriculture, 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.

BCGHD recommends that if you notice any symptoms or unexpected deaths in your flock, please report them immediately to the Ohio Poultry Association (614.882.6111), or the Ohio Department of Agriculture (regular business hours: 614.728.6220; after hours: 888.456.3405).

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