

## Update on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

- Highly Pathogenic Eurasian H5 avian influenza was recently found in wild birds in South & North Carolina.
- The species it was discovered in are migratory waterfowl.
- Because migratory waterfowl in South and North Carolina or birds they encounter migrate through Ohio, precautions should be taken to prevent the potential exposure of both the commercial poultry industry and backyard poultry community birds to high path avian influenza.
- Biosecurity for backyard poultry includes preventing wild birds from mingling with the flock. Preventative measures include ensuring your domestic birds cannot access areas migrating birds may visit, such as ponds, puddles, other open water sources, pastures, fields, etc. Prevent interaction with other wild birds in your flock using fencing or bird netting. The aim is to keep your domestic birds from encountering migratory waterfowl.**
- The Ohio Department of Agriculture's Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (ADDL) will test for high path avian influenza in birds suspected of being infected. They would like necropsy specimens submitted via a vet.
- If you get a call from clients regarding sick birds, [CLICK HERE](#) for a list of vets who see poultry in Ohio.
- Source new birds from reputable sources such as an NPIP approved hatchery.**
- Hunters play an important role in biosecurity. [CLICK HERE](#) for biosecurity tips for hunters.
- [USDA APHIS issued the following update on this topic on 1/18/2022:](#)

WASHINGTON, January 18, 2022 – The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has confirmed two additional findings of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in wild birds – one in Colleton County, South Carolina and one in Hyde County, North Carolina. These finds follow confirmation on January 14, 2022 of HPAI in a wild bird in Colleton County, South Carolina. All three findings are H5N1 HPAI.

These findings are not unexpected, as wild birds can be infected with HPAI and show no signs of illness. They can carry the disease to new areas when migrating. APHIS anticipates additional wild bird findings as our robust wild bird sampling program continues into the spring.

APHIS will post these and all future wild bird findings on its [website](#) on a weekly basis. Stakeholders should check the website on a routine basis, as no future stakeholder announcements are planned for wild bird findings.

Since wild birds can be infected with these viruses without appearing sick, people should minimize direct contact with wild birds by using gloves. If contact occurs, wash your hands with soap and water, and change clothing before having any contact with healthy domestic poultry and birds. Hunters should dress game birds in the field whenever possible and practice good biosecurity to prevent any potential disease spread. Biosecurity information is available at: [https://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal\\_health/2015/fsc\\_hpai\\_hunters.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/2015/fsc_hpai_hunters.pdf).

Given these additional findings, anyone involved with poultry – commercial or backyard flocks alike – should review their biosecurity plan and enhance their biosecurity practices to assure the health of their birds. APHIS has materials about biosecurity, including videos, checklists, and a toolkit available for producers on our [website](#). In addition to practicing good biosecurity, all bird owners should prevent contact between their birds and wild birds and report sick birds or unusual bird deaths to State/Federal officials, either through their state veterinarian or through USDA's toll-free number at 1-866-536-7593. Additional information on biosecurity for backyard flocks can be found at <http://healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov>.

