

P R E S S R E L E A S E

DATE: May 21, 2022

Bayfield County, WI—Bayfield County Public Health Department was notified by the Wisconsin Department of Health (DHS) on Friday night that the highly contagious avian flu has been identified in a backyard flock in Bayfield County. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture and Consumer Trade Protection (DATCP) has recently detected highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in 13 Wisconsin counties. Wild birds can become infected with HPAI and may show no signs of infection. When the wild birds migrate, they have the potential to spread HPAI to domestic poultry.

Because many of our residents keep backyard flocks and domestic poultry, HPAI could continue to affect families and small farms in Bayfield County. Flock owners should evaluate their premises and implement safety measures to keep domestic birds separate from wild birds. Safety precautions include:

- Move domestic flocks indoors if possible.
- Fence or contain outdoor flocks so they don't have contact with wild birds.
- Move feed and water sources to a protected area (fenced or in a building) to prevent wild birds from eating or congregating with domestic birds.
- Do NOT allow domestic waterfowl (i.e. ducks, geese) to access ponds or surface water where wild waterfowl frequent or nest.
- Use biosecurity measures, such as disposable boot covers (preferred) and/or disinfectant footbaths for anyone having contact with your flock.
- Keep visitors to your flock at a minimum.
- Wash hands thoroughly after cleaning, feeding, or caring for your domestic poultry.

Owners of flocks are asked to watch your domestic flock for signs of illness. Signs of HPAI in domestic birds are:

- Sudden death without clinical signs
- Lack of energy and appetite or incoordination
- Decreased egg production or soft-shelled or misshapen eggs
- Swelling of head, comb, eyelid, wattles, and hocks
- Purple discoloration of wattles, comb, and legs
- Nasal discharge, coughing, sneezing or diarrhea

If you find dead birds or wildlife, avoid handling them with bare hands. If removing a dead bird is necessary, wear gloves or use a plastic bag to put it in the garbage. Wash your hands with soap and water and throw away any gloves after disposing of dead birds or wildlife.

Report sick birds. Don't wait. To report increased mortality or signs of illness among domestic birds, contact DATCP at (608)224-4872 (business hours) or (800)943-0003 (after hours and weekends).

For more information about Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and Wisconsin's response visit https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/HPAIWisconsin.aspx

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