

Avian Influenza Reminder for Poultry Farmers

November 2, 2017

Avian influenza (AI) can infect both domesticated and wild birds, including chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quails, ducks, geese, and guinea fowl. Birds become infected when they have direct contact with the ocular or nasal discharge or feces from infected birds or from contact with contaminated surfaces, food or water supply. AI is most often transmitted from one infected flock to another by movement of infected birds or contaminated equipment and people.

All commercial and non-commercial poultry farmers should monitor for mortalities and track flock feed and water consumption. Watch for any clinical signs of disease, such as depression, decreased feed consumption, a drop in egg production, swollen wattles, sneezing, gasping, discharge from the nose or eyes, diarrhea or sudden death. **If you have any concerns regarding the health status of your flock, contact your veterinarian immediately.**

Key steps to reduce the risk of infection in your flock include:

- Ensure adequate training of farm and company personnel in biosecurity and disease prevention.
- All people entering poultry barns, including farmers, employees and service providers must put on clean footwear, protective clothing and follow all biosecurity protocols each time a barn is entered.
- Minimize visits to other poultry production sites and avoid any co-mingling of birds or contact with outside/wild birds.
- Avoid exchanging and sharing equipment with other poultry production sites or farms.
- Ensure all vehicles and farm equipment that access the barn vicinity are properly washed, disinfected and thoroughly dried before use.
- Ensure that laneways are restricted and secured.
- Prevent wild bird and rodent entry to poultry barns and related facilities.
- If possible, "heat treat" the barn/litter ahead of chick or poult placement (to 30°C for at least 3 days).

Additional information is available at:

http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/livestock/vet/facts/avian_influenza.htm

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/livestock/poultry/smallflock.html>

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/animals/terrestrial-animals/biosecurity/standards-and-principles/avian-biosecurity/eng/1344748344710/1344748451521>

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/organic/news/2015/2015-02a2.htm>

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