

HPAI FAQ FOR EGG FARM WORKERS

What is avian influenza?

Avian influenza (AI), a virus affecting birds and poultry that is commonly known as “bird flu,” is an infectious disease of birds caused by type A strains of the influenza virus. There are both low-pathogenic and high-pathogenic strains; the strains currently causing concern in the U.S. are highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI).

What is happening with highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI)?

Positive findings of HPAI have been identified in commercial flocks in the U.S. HPAI also was reported in wild birds in the U.S. and Canada, and there have been numerous cases of HPAI overseas.

What happens on farms where HPAI is found?

Once a commercial poultry farm is identified as HPAI positive, within 24-48 hours, USDA is onsite to provide guidance in hen euthanasia (which is required by USDA for all flocks on an impacted farm, regardless of whether they have symptoms of AI), mortality disposal and site cleanup. Security is maintained on affected farms to limit further spread of the disease to non-affected farms.

How is avian influenza transmitted to commercial farms?

Avian influenza is transmitted through infected wild birds and waterfowl, either through direct contact with other birds or indirectly if the disease is unintentionally carried onto a farm by birds, equipment, vehicles or other means.

How do we keep HPAI off our egg farms?

Biosecurity is the most important aspect of on-farm disease prevention. Caring for flocks and keeping them from getting sick are our responsibilities – and our livelihoods. Preventing disease is critical for the health and welfare of hens and to egg production. Biosecurity as part of an overall hen health and well-being program has always been a priority on America’s egg farms.

What can I do to help with biosecurity?

Workers on our farm are encouraged to follow our biosecurity program. You can help by limiting contact with wild birds and not hunting wild birds, not keeping birds at home, limiting contact with workers on other farms, and being mindful of the potential to carry disease onto our farm with vehicles, clothing or equipment and taking all necessary steps to protect our flocks.

Am I safe as a farm worker?

Bird flu is an animal health issue, not a human health concern. It's extremely rare for bird flu to affect humans. America’s egg farmers maintain extensive health and safety practices to protect farm workers from exposure to any disease while at work. Keeping our team safe and healthy is of the utmost importance, and our farm is committed to providing all protective equipment and gear for our team if HPAI is found here.

Are eggs safe to eat?

Eggs are safe. USDA confirms avian influenza (bird flu) is not a food safety issue or public health risk. There is no evidence that bird flu can be transmitted through food.