



PRESS RELEASE

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Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Confirmed in Domestic Poultry

The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry and the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) have confirmed a positive case of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in Sequoyah County, Oklahoma. The virus was found in a commercial poultry flock.

“While this case of HPAI is not unexpected, we have prepared for this and are working closely with USDA and livestock producers to control and eradicate this disease from our state,” said Dr. Rod Hall, State Veterinarian for Oklahoma. “We have activated our Avian Influenza Response Plan and are working diligently with federal partners to prevent further spread of the virus.”

Flock owners should prevent contact between their birds and wild birds and report sick birds or unusual deaths to state officials. Biosecurity resources and best practices are available at [www.https://ag.ok.gov/disease-alerts](https://ag.ok.gov/disease-alerts). If producers suspect signs of HPAI in their flocks, they should contact their veterinarian immediately. Possible cases should also be reported to the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture at (405) 522-6141.

Beginning May 1, 2022, all poultry exhibition, public sales and swap meets are banned in the state of Oklahoma until further notice in order to halt any potential spread of this virus. The ban is set to end on July 30th, unless evidence shows it should be extended. The order can be found on our website at ag.ok.gov/disease-alerts.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the recent HPAI detections in birds do not present an immediate public health concern. It remains safe to eat poultry products. There is no risk to the food supply, but the affected birds will not enter the food supply system. As a reminder, the proper handling and cooking of poultry and eggs to an internal temperature of 165 °F kills bacteria and viruses.

State officials have placed a quarantine on the affected premises while federal and state partners work jointly to assess the extent of the infection. Additional surveillance of all poultry flocks, commercial and backyard, will be initiated in the area surrounding the affected premises.

About HPAI

HPAI is highly contagious, viral disease affecting bird populations. HPAI can travel in wild birds without those birds appearing sick, but is often fatal to domestic bird populations, including chickens and turkeys. The virus can spread through droppings or nasal discharge of an infected bird, which can contaminate dust and soil. If any of the following symptoms are noted, owners should contact the state veterinarian's office immediately at (405) 522-6141.

Signs of HPAI include:

- Sudden increase in bird deaths without any clinical signs
- Lack of energy and appetite
- Decrease in egg production
- Soft- or thin-shelled or misshapen eggs
- Swelling of the head, eyelids, comb, wattles, and hocks
- Purple/blue discoloration of the wattles, comb, and legs
- Gasping for air (difficulty breathing)
- Coughing, sneezing, and/or nasal discharge (runny nose)
- Stumbling or falling down
- Diarrhea

For updates on this developing situation or for general questions, please call 211 or visit <https://ag.ok.gov/disease-alerts/>.

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