

November 2024 Update

November 18, 2024

On behalf of the Feather Board Command Centre (FBCC), the following provides important updates regarding the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and Avian Metapneumovirus (aMPV) situations. FBCC would like to remind producers to rigorously follow their daily biosecurity protocols, as well as consider appropriate additional biosecurity measures to help prevent disease occurrence and spread in the province.

HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA

CURRENT NATIONAL SITUATION

Since the last FBCC update on September 18, the following cases of HPAI have been detected:

British Columbia – 41 active premises (H5N1 and H5N2 serotypes)

Alberta – 3 active premises

Saskatchewan – 1 active premises

Quebec – 1 active premises

There has also been the first reported case in Canada of a human case of avian influenza. A teenager in British Columbia is currently hospitalized and public health is investigating to attempt to identify the source of the infection.

CURRENT ONTARIO SITUATION

There are currently no positive detections in commercial poultry flocks in Ontario. However, there has been a positive detection in a turkey vulture, indicating that avian influenza is circulating in the environment at a potential high viral load.

As such, [heightened biosecurity protocols](#) and appropriate deadstock management should be in place at all poultry farms. It is extremely important that all farmers remain vigilant during the fall migration period and report any signs of illness to your veterinarian and local Board office.

Farmers should also report sick or dead wild birds and wildlife to the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (CWHC) by calling 1-866-673-4781 or using the [online reporting tool](#).

CURRENT SITUATION IN THE UNITED STATES

HPAI has also been detected in 12 commercial flocks and 14 backyard flock in the United States of America in the last 30 days. Details can be found [here](#). They also continue to report positive cases on over 400 dairy farms in 15 different states and subsequent positive cases in other mammals, including humans.



AVIAN METAPNEUMOVIRUS

Since September 18, OMAFA has shared 6 additional reports of aMPV cases in Ontario with FBCC. **As a reminder, aMPV is a highly contagious disease and can spread between all poultry species.** It is commonly known as Turkey Viral Rhinotracheitis in turkeys and Swollen Head Syndrome in chickens. The clinical signs of aMPV are primarily in the respiratory tract and mortality may be severe, thus causing confusion with other diseases such as bronchitis and Avian Influenza. The mortality rate of aMPV depends on virulence of virus strain, species, age of birds, breeding conditions, immune status, and secondary infections. The disease is spread through direct contact with affected poultry, introduced by wild birds or by introduction of infected materials or equipment. The syndrome is described further in the [Ontario Animal Health Network advisory](#).

If you are providing service to poultry farmers in Ontario please reinforce your biosecurity protocols, with all deliveries or loading in the affected counties being the last on the route, where possible.

HEIGHTENED BIOSECURITY PROTOCOLS

The following is a list of biosecurity measures recommended for Ontario poultry farms:

- Each farmer, employee and every person entering all poultry barns must put on clean footwear, protective clothing and follow all biosecurity protocols on every entry into barns.
- Minimize visits to other poultry/livestock/wildlife sites and avoid any co-mingling of birds or contact with outside/wild birds.
- Avoid exchanging equipment with other poultry/livestock/wildlife sites.
- Ensure all vehicles/farm equipment that access the barn vicinity are properly washed and disinfected and that the laneway is restricted/secured.
- Ensure adequate training of farm and company personnel in biosecurity and disease prevention.
- Ensure adequate control of wild birds and rodents.
- Have a pressure washer or a hose available to wash tires and equipment, and make this available to all service vehicles.
- If possible, “heat treat” the barn/litter ahead of chick or poult placement (to 30°C for a minimum of 3 days).

Should you suspect any signs of health concerns in your flock, please contact your veterinarian and your board office immediately.

STAY INFORMED

FBCC is committed to providing timely communications to Ontario’s poultry industry and will continue to keep you updated as the situation evolves. FBCC staff are collaborating with CFIA and OMAFA in responding to the situation and working to support business continuity for the poultry industry. If you haven’t already done so, please visit the [FBCC website](#) and sign up for Disease Alerts.