



PREVENTING AVIAN INFLUENZA SPREAD DURING POULTRY DEPOPULATION

WHEN WORKING AROUND AVIAN FLU IT IS IMPORTANT TO:



WEAR PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) as required by the USDA to protect yourself, your family, and flocks and herds near you. There is [recommended PPE](#) depending on the work tasks you are completing.



DISINFECT YOUR SHOES OR BOOTS
be careful not to bring home items from the farm.



SHOWER AFTER REMOVING PROTECTIVE GEAR
at work if possible.



AVOID CONTACT WITH OTHER POULTRY OR DAIRY FARMS
Use strict biosecurity measures to prevent spread of disease.

GET YOUR ANNUAL FLU SHOT

There is no avian flu vaccine. Getting the regular flu vaccine can help prevent you from getting the regular flu and avian flu at the same time, preventing worse illness.

Getting your flu shot helps keep you and everyone else safe.



MONITOR FOR AVIAN FLU SYMPTOMS:

- red, crusty, or goopy eyes (conjunctivitis)
- cough with or without sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose
- muscle or body aches
- headaches
- feeling tired
- trouble breathing
- fever or chills

YOU MAY NEED TO SEE A MEDICAL PROVIDER

There are medicines that can help you recover better and faster, if taken within two days (48 hours) of feeling sick. Seek medical help as soon as you feel sick. If you are having trouble breathing or are feeling worried about your sickness, get emergency medical help. Let providers know in advance that you have been exposed to avian influenza.

IF THERE IS DEPOPULATION DUE TO AVIAN FLU ON YOUR POULTRY FARM:



Watch for symptoms from the first day you are exposed until **10 days** after the last time you were exposed.



If you feel sick, stay away from others and **call your local health department** for information on testing.



Don't delay seeing a medical provider. Early treatment can help you feel better faster.



If you have trouble breathing or feel very sick, get **emergency medical help**.

For Health Guidance:

Contact your

[County Health Department](#)



AVIAN FLU CAN MAKE FARM WORKERS SICK

Avian influenza, or “bird flu”, is a virus that spreads fast, especially among chickens, turkeys, and wild birds. Avian flu has also been found in cows and unpasteurized cow milk.

People can get infected by avian flu through contact with sick animals or by handling animal materials like bodily fluids, feces, or milk. To stop avian flu in poultry, sick poultry have to be killed. Workers who perform depopulation are at higher risk of getting this virus. Anyone on the farm may also get infected even though they are not doing the depopulating.

AVIAN FLU IS NOT COMMON IN HUMANS, BUT IT MIGHT BECOME MORE COMMON

- Usually, avian flu doesn’t make people sick, but flu viruses can change fast. If the virus changes and spreads easily to humans, it could cause a big flu outbreak.
- According to the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), as of January 2025 there have been 67 confirmed cases of avian flu in people in the United States, and one related death.
- Farm workers who work with poultry and dairy are at higher risk of exposure.

MAKE A CALL IF YOU FIND SICK OR DEAD BIRDS

Report sick poultry: to USDA (866) 536-7593 or NYS Department of Ag and Markets (518) 457-3502

Report sick wild birds: using NYS Department of Environmental Conservation’s [online form](#)

RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE:

- Learn about biosecurity measures for poultry operations at the [USDA Defend the Flock](#) website
- Contact the [New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health](#) (NYCAMH) for:
 - proactive safety training
 - technical assistance
 - personal protective equipment
- Request flu vaccines or avian flu testing for farmworkers through your [County Health Department](#)

MANAGING STRESS RELATED TO AVIAN FLU

The threat of avian flu and depopulation presents a stressful and emotional challenge for producers and workers. Having biosecurity programs and emergency response plans in place can help to minimize stress. If you are feeling overwhelmed, reach out:

[NYCAMH Farm Partners](#)

607-788-0037

[NY FarmNet](#)

1-800-547-3276

SAMHSA National Hotline

(800) 662-HELP (4357)

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

Call or text 988

Date updated: 2/3/2025