



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF  
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Karen Ross, Secretary

January 7, 2025

## State Veterinarian Bans All California Poultry and Dairy Cattle Exhibitions at Fairs and Shows

Dear Poultry and Dairy Cattle Exhibition Organizers and Managers:

H5N1 Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) has become widespread among dairy cows and domestic poultry (commercial and backyard flocks) in California. In fact, California Governor Gavin Newsom has declared a [state of emergency](#) due to these detections. Since August 2024, there have been over 700 dairy herds and 60 poultry flocks affecting over 15 million birds with new dairies and flocks being detected.

**Due to the continued spread of H5N1 Bird Flu in California, the State Veterinarian has implemented a ban on all California Poultry and Dairy Cattle Exhibitions at Fairs and Shows immediately until further notice. This action is required to minimize the danger of exposing people and non-infected cows and birds to the disease.**

We urge dairy cow and poultry owners to prevent this devastating disease by continuing to practice enhanced biosecurity measures and prevent comingling with wild bird populations, with other poultry/dairy cows, and their owners. They should also avoid moving or sharing equipment that may serve to transfer the virus. Dairy cow and poultry owners with flocks that have experienced any unusual/suspicious illness or deaths should not move their cows, birds, or their milk or poultry products and should call their veterinarian or our CDFA Sick Bird Hotline at 866-922-BIRD (2473).

Avian influenza is a highly contagious and often fatal disease in birds. The viral spread is promoted by wild birds, especially in wild waterfowl such as ducks and geese, but many other wild bird species can also be a source of spread. The disease spreads through movement of infected or exposed birds, direct or indirect contact with infected wild and domestic birds or contact with virus on fomites (surfaces) such as hands, shoes, clothing, or feet and fur of rodents and other animals. In addition, dairy cows have also been affected by the disease this year, so increased precautions should be taken especially for farms that have both cows and poultry or are in the vicinity of a dairy cow farm.

Clinical signs of H5N1 bird flu in cows include decrease in feed consumption with a simultaneous decrease in rumination and rumen motility, respiratory signs (including clear nasal discharge), acute drop in milk production (severely affected cattle may have thicker, concentrated, colostrum-like milk or produce no milk at all), abnormal tacky or loose feces, lethargy, dehydration, and fever. For more information, please visit our [CDFA H5N1 Bird Flu Virus in Livestock webpage](#).

Clinical signs of H5N1 bird flu (highly pathogenic) in poultry include sudden death, trouble breathing, clear runny discharge (from nose, mouth, and eyes), lethargy, decreased food and water intake, swelling (eyes, head, wattles, or combs), discolored or bruised comb, wattles, or legs, stumbling/falling or twisted neck. For more information, please visit our [CDFA HPAI H5N1 in Poultry](#)





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[webpage.](#)

The cooperation of cow and bird owners is critical in controlling this disease; when exposed cows and birds are not moved and comingled, disease spread can be prevented. We will continue to assess the threat over the next few months and rescind this ban if the situation changes. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly. Thank you for your cooperation.

For up-to-date information about the HPAI 2022-24 outbreak, you can check the [USDA APHIS Detections of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza webpage.](#)

Sincerely,

Dr. Annette Jones  
State Veterinarian

