



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF  
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Karen Ross, Secretary

## Recommended Caution for California Poultry Exhibitions

August 26, 2022

Dear Poultry Exhibition Organizers and Managers:

This advisory is in response to questions about the current risks of spreading Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) via poultry and poultry products at exhibitions such as fairs and shows. We are posting this advisory now because of the recent increase of disease spread in California, and the risks associated with exhibitions. We urge poultry owners to prevent this devastating disease by practicing enhanced biosecurity measures and by preventing comingling with wild bird populations and with other poultry and their owners. They should also avoid moving or sharing equipment that may serve to transfer virus. Poultry owners with flocks that have experienced any unusual/suspicious illness or deaths should not move their birds or their poultry products, should not attend bird exhibitions, and should call their veterinarian or our CDFA Sick Bird Hotline at 866-922-BIRD (2473).

Since January 2022, the outbreak of HPAI has spread across all four North American flyways and 39 U.S. states affecting wild birds and domestic poultry. HPAI virus was first detected in a California backyard domestic poultry flock in Sacramento County on August 10, 2022 and is rapidly spreading. To date, HPAI has been detected in backyard flocks in Butte, Contra Costa, and Sacramento Counties and in a commercial flock in Fresno County, California. In addition to domestic flocks, HPAI has been detected in wild birds in the following thirteen counties so far: Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Mendocino, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, Santa Clara, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, and Yolo.

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.

There are movement Control Areas in counties with infected commercial poultry premises. A movement permit will be required to move poultry, poultry products, and poultry equipment into/out of/through a Control Area. Stay up to date on which counties have Control Areas by checking our online [HPAI Permitting Infographic](#). To request a permit or determine if your movement involves a Control Area, contact the Animal Health Branch Permitting unit at [SFSPERMITS@CDFA.CA.GOV](mailto:SFSPERMITS@CDFA.CA.GOV). CDFA highly recommends that poultry owners shelter their flocks in place, avoid unnecessary bird movements, and diligently enhance their biosecurity practices to protect their flocks.

Clinical signs of HPAI 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 Avian Health Program [webpage](#).





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**To support disease containment efforts, exhibitions are NOT permitted in a HPAI Control Area, and the California State Veterinarian recommends that all avian exhibitions practice good biosecurity and health screening of all participating birds.** The cooperation of bird owners is critical in controlling this disease; when exposed birds are not moved and comingled, disease spread can be prevented. *An exhibition is an assembly of birds brought to the assembly location for purposes that include public display for any duration. Exhibitions include, but are not limited to sales, auctions, shows, swap meets, pet marts, fair exhibits, pet stores, and petting zoos. Public zoos are not included in this definition.*

Sincerely,

Annette  
Jones

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Dr. Annette Jones  
State Veterinarian

