



Department of Public Health

Monroe County, New York

Adam J. Bello
County Executive

Michael D. Mendoza, MD, MPH, MS
Commissioner of Public Health

For immediate release
Friday, April 1, 2022

AVIAN INFLUENZA FOUND IN MONROE COUNTY

The highly-infectious disease affects poultry, other fowl and wild birds; keepers of backyard poultry are urged to take precautions to prevent spread

ROCHESTER, NY — A non-commercial backyard flock of chickens, ducks and pheasants in Monroe County tested positive this week for the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). The state Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) responded to the incident.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the recent HPAI detections in birds here in Monroe County and across the country do not present an immediate public health concern. No human cases of these avian influenza viruses have been detected in the United States.

“We have investigated this case and believe there is no risk to the general public,” Monroe County Public Health Commissioner Dr. Michael Mendoza said. “However, we urge anyone with backyard poultry, ducks or geese, and game hunters who come into contact with wild waterfowl or turkeys, to take extra precautions. Songbirds do not appear susceptible to this virus, so backyard birdfeeders are considered safe.”

In recent months, HPAI has been detected in commercial and backyard flocks as well as wild birds in multiple states.

Samples from the Monroe County flock were tested at the Cornell University Animal Health Diagnostic Center and confirmed at the USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa.

The affected premises within Monroe County were quarantined by AGM and birds remaining on the property were euthanized to prevent spread of the disease.

All poultry producers within the county, including residents who keep backyard flocks, are encouraged to limit outdoor access for their birds at this time; keep their birds away from wild ducks and geese and their droppings; and take extra steps to prevent their birds from becoming infected. According to the USDA, best practices include:



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- Discourage unnecessary visitors and use biosecurity signs to warn people not to enter buildings without permission.
- Ask all visitors if they have had any contact with any birds in the past five days.
- Forbid entry to employees and visitors who own any kind of fowl.
- Require all visitors to cover and disinfect all footwear.
- Lock all entrances to chicken houses after hours.
- Avoid non-essential vehicular traffic on-farm.
- After hauling birds to processors, clean and disinfect poultry transport coops and vehicles before they return to the farm.
- Report anything unusual, especially sick or dead birds, to AGM.

To report sick birds, a sudden drop in egg production or an unexplained number of bird deaths, please contact AGM's Division of Animal Industry at (518) 457-3502 or the USDA at (866) 536-7593.

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