



September 15, 2022

Dear Partner in Agriculture,

On Sept. 15, 2022 we confirmed a strain of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in a backyard poultry flock in Obion County. To protect the health of other domesticated birds in Tennessee, I'm ordering an immediate halt to poultry shows, exhibitions, and sales statewide.

This was not an easy decision. The Tennessee Department of Agriculture understands and values the importance of livestock competition and sales. Poultry is a vital part of Tennessee's thriving agriculture industry and we are taking this step to safeguard that sector for the long term.

HPAI is known to be deadly for domesticated fowl. It's critical we move quickly to stop the virus from spreading and we need your help to minimize the risk. We are working closely with our federal and state partners to coordinate resources and response, and we are following strict protocols for quarantine, testing, disposal, cleaning, disinfection, and monitoring.

For now, any events where poultry can congregate are prohibited. That includes poultry shows, exhibitions, livestock sales, flea markets, and swap meets.

Although HPAI does not pose a food safety risk, no infected poultry will be allowed to enter the food supply. Poultry and eggs are safe to eat when handled and cooked properly. The risk of human infection with avian influenza during poultry outbreaks is very low. In fact, no transmission to humans was reported during the outbreak that affected commercial poultry farms in Tennessee in 2017.

Owners of backyard and commercial poultry flocks are encouraged to closely observe domesticated birds and report a sudden increase in the number of sick birds or bird deaths to my office by calling 615-837-5120 or by calling USDA at 1-866-536-7593.

You can find more information about our response to this incident and resources for bird owners online at www.tn.gov/agriculture/businesses/animals/animal-health/avian-influenza.html.

Thank you for helping us stop the spread of HPAI. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact my office at 615-837-5120 or Animal.Health@tn.gov.

Dr. Samantha Beaty, D.V.M.
Tennessee State Veterinarian



Department of
Agriculture

Animal
Health