

**For:** State and County Offices

**Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Guidance**

**Approved by:** Acting Administrator

*Chris P. Beyerhelm*

**1 Overview**

**A Background**

HPAI, commonly known as “bird flu”, is caused by a virus, and it occurs naturally in birds. While wild bird species can carry the virus but usually do not get sick, domesticated birds such as chickens, turkeys and ducks, when exposed to the virus usually die. Remaining poultry in the infected flock are then euthanized. HPAI strains are extremely infectious, often fatal to domestic poultry, and can spread rapidly from flock to flock.

Because of ongoing outbreaks of HPAI, it is important to understand how to prevent its spread. FSA employees and contractors must take precautions regarding any interactions with all aspects of the poultry industry, especially on poultry farms.

**B Purpose**

This notice provides information about actions employees must take to deliver programs with an emphasis on biosecurity to prevent the spread of HPAI.

**C Contact**

If there are questions about HPAI guidance:

- County Offices shall contact the State Office
- State Offices shall contact the appropriate program area in the National Office.

Disposal Date	Distribution
December 1, 2015	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

6-19-15

## 2 Action

### A General

All employees must review and become familiar with APHIS guidance provided by e-mail on April 23, 2015 (Exhibit 1).

See subparagraph D for available resources to obtain additional information on HPAI.

### B State Office Action

FSA programs will continue to be delivered without delays.

State Offices may use funds from their current allotments to obtain protective gear, if necessary, for employees to deliver FSA programs.

**Note:** If current allotments are not adequate, State budget contacts should contact the appropriate budget analyst according to this table to request additional funding.

State Office	BUD Analyst Contact Information
Arizona, California, Colorado, Guam, Hawaii, Kansas, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Utah	Lillie McComb, BUD by 1 of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e-mail to <a href="mailto:lillie.mccomb@wdc.usda.gov">lillie.mccomb@wdc.usda.gov</a></li> <li>telephone at 202-720-2201</li> </ul>
Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Virgin Islands	TC Chappelle, BUD by 1 of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e-mail to <a href="mailto:tarnya.chappelle@wdc.usda.gov">tarnya.chappelle@wdc.usda.gov</a></li> <li>telephone at 202-720-5149.</li> </ul>
Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia	LaTosha Fleming, BUD by 1 of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e-mail to <a href="mailto:latosha.fleming@wdc.usda.gov">latosha.fleming@wdc.usda.gov</a></li> <li>telephone at 202-720-8861.</li> </ul>
Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington, and Wyoming	Ricky Williams, BUD by 1 of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e-mail to <a href="mailto:ricky.williams@wdc.usda.gov">ricky.williams@wdc.usda.gov</a></li> <li>telephone at 202-772-9017.</li> </ul>
Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin	Elizabeth Hill, BUD by 1 of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e-mail to <a href="mailto:elizabeth.hill@wdc.usda.gov">elizabeth.hill@wdc.usda.gov</a></li> <li>telephone at 202-720-9862.</li> </ul>

State Offices shall ensure FSA contractors are:

- scheduled for visits to farms with poultry only when absolutely necessary
- provided with the APHIS guidance before the visit.

**2 Action (Continued)**

**C County Office Action**

County Offices must conduct a staff meeting to discuss how this notice will apply to delivery of FSA programs.

County Offices shall call to schedule farm visits for producers receiving a payment, such as TAP or applying for an FSFL or FLP loan, and confirm if poultry is present on the farm, including small and “back yard” flocks. When poultry is present:

- conduct the visit only when necessary
- follow biosecurity measures required by the producer or integrator, as appropriate
- ensure producer will be present during the visit
- postpone routine site visits, such as spot checks and collateral inspections for FSFL and FLP loans.

**Note:** Farm visits, in the case of small flocks, to locations other than where the poultry is kept are permissible.

**D Additional Resources**

The following websites provide additional information on HPAI:

- **[http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=avian\\_influenza.html](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=avian_influenza.html)** contains links to:
  - fact sheets
  - questions and answers
  - brochures
  - posters
- **[http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/birdbiosecurity/biosecurity/basicspoultry.htm](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/birdbiosecurity/biosecurity/basicspoultry.htm)** contains links to:
  - biosecurity for poultry, pet birds and wild birds
  - avian influenza.

**Note:** Fact sheets and posters may be reproduced for display in offices.

**APHIS E-mail on Protecting the Health of the Poultry Industry**

**The following message is being transmitted to you as a  
Departmental Management (DM) service to all USDA employees.  
Agency E-mail administrators: Please forward this message to all USDA employees.**

**\*\*\*\*\* Please do not respond to this mailbox. Thank you. \*\*\*\*\***

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service  
Office of the Administrator  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250**

**TO: USDA Employees**

Due to the ongoing outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), and our strong field office presence in rural areas across the country, it is important to understand how we can all help prevent spread of this disease. USDA employees and partners should take precautions regarding any interactions with all aspects of the poultry industry, especially on farms. Some of the things you can do to protect the health of the poultry industry are:

1. Do not go to a poultry farm unless it is absolutely necessary. If a farm visit is required, only one farm should be visited per day. After the visit, wash the vehicle both outside and inside. Clothes should be washed and shoes or boots cleaned and disinfected.
2. Do not go from plant to plant, or feed mill to feed mill, during any one day. Take the same precautions after visiting a plant or feed mill as noted above for visits to farms.
3. Wear plastic slip-on boots in order to help prevent the spread of HPAI.
4. Wear coveralls and foot gear and follow appropriate disposal protocols in order to prevent the spread of HPAI. If the owner cannot provide coveralls, be sure the clothing you wear is freshly washed.
5. When conducting a review or otherwise working at a complex, do not visit another complex in the area.
6. Never walk on to a farm or into a complex without the owner present.
7. If possible, call ahead to set up an appointment so that you can be escorted on and off the premises.
8. Always follow the owner or company's biosecurity guidance and requirements.

It is our responsibility to be as cautious as possible during these outbreaks. We must show that we understand the need for being responsible for our actions regarding our interactions with the poultry industry. Although USDA may have the authority and the need to visit any complex, plant, feed mill, or farm, we also have a responsibility to ensure that we are helping to prevent spread of this disease.

Thank you very much for all you do for American Agriculture.

Sincerely,

Dr. John R. Clifford  
Chief Veterinary Officer  
USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service