



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE SUSPENDS POULTRY EXHIBITION AND SALE EVENTS

SPRINGFIELD, IL - The Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) is issuing a 30-day suspension, effective today, Tuesday, February 11, 2025, on the exhibition or sale of poultry at swap meets, exhibitions, flea markets, and auction markets in response to the ongoing threat of H5N1 avian flu. The move is intended to reduce and prevent the spread of the disease, which has been detected in commercial and backyard flocks in Illinois.

“Prevention is our most effective tool to mitigate the spread of avian flu. By being proactive in biosecurity and limiting poultry movement and exposure, we are protecting the public as well as the poultry industry,” **said Dr. Mark Ernst, IDOA State Veterinarian.**

Avian flu is caused by an influenza type A virus which can infect poultry (such as chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, domestic ducks, geese, and guinea fowl) and wild birds (especially waterfowl). Avian flu virus strains are extremely infectious, often fatal to chickens, and can spread rapidly from flock to flock.

Poultry flock owners, managers, and veterinarians should report any unusual findings in domestic poultry, such as increase in mortality, decrease in water consumption, decrease in egg production, or respiratory signs, including coughing and sneezing, immediately to IDOA at 217-782-4944 or the United States Department of Agriculture at 866-536-7593.

Everyone is reminded not to handle or attempt to capture wild waterfowl or other birds displaying signs of illness. Due to risk of infection to other animals, dogs, cats and other pets should be kept away from the carcasses of birds that may have died from avian flu.

“The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) strongly supports this precautionary move by the Department of Agriculture to reduce the spread of the H5N1 avian flu virus,” **said IDPH Director Dr. Sameer Vohra.** “At this point, Illinois has had no known human cases, and while the risk to the general population remains low, this action by IDOA will improve our preparedness by reducing the chance that a person comes in close contact with an infected bird or animal. IDPH continues to monitor human exposures very closely. We are committed to using every tool at our disposal to enhance our preparation, communication, and education to help combat H5N1.”

While avian flu has also been detected in dairy cattle, no cases have been confirmed in Illinois to date. Cattle generally have much lower mortality rates than poultry and usually recover from the disease.

For more information regarding avian flu, visit the USDA site at aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-detections

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