

Avian influenza

Information for Yukon poultry producers

Last updated: September 2, 2026

This document is for Yukon bird owners, back yard flocks and poultry producers; this is an update in addition to the information about [Avian Influenza – information for poultry producers in the Yukon](#)

What is new?

A case of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) was recently detected in southern Yukon. This is not unexpected, as avian influenza viruses occur naturally in wild bird species and have been detected in the Yukon in the past.

Learn more about wildlife testing results at Yukon.ca/avian-flu.

Why is this important?

If domestic birds get HPAI they will die or become gravely ill and can infect other domestic or wild birds. Early in their illness, infected birds may show:

- lack of energy, movement or appetite;
- decreased egg production;
- swelling around the head, neck and eyes;
- coughing, gasping for air or sneezing;
- nervous signs, tremors or lack of coordination;
- diarrhea; and
- sudden death.

Symptoms progress to death in 24 to 48 hours and mortality among those infected is near 100 per cent.

What should I do if my birds are sick or found dead?

Contact your veterinarian or the Animal Health and Protection Branch at 867-667-5600 or animalhealth@yukon.ca

You can also report the illness or death using the reportable hazard form on Yukon.ca: Animal Health Unit: reportable hazard report | Government of Yukon.

Why must I report suspected avian influenza in my flock?

When a strain of avian influenza is designated 'highly pathogenic' it means that it will kill most of the infected birds. If you suspect avian influenza in your flock, you must report it to the Animal Health and Protection Branch at animalhealth@yukon.ca or 867-667-5600. This requirement applies to small

backyard flocks, as well as to commercial flocks. Government of Yukon officials can place a quarantine order immediately. This will prevent spread of the virus. Once a quarantine order is in place, you become eligible to apply for compensation from Government of Yukon programs.

The federal government will also respond to cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza and Yukon government officials will work with them to support the poultry industry in the Yukon.

What is the purpose of a quarantine order and how does it affect my neighbours?

A quarantine order provides instruction on containing the virus and minimizing its spread and allows the government to issue compensation.

The goal of a quarantine order is to contain the virus and minimize its spread. In some situations, a surveillance area or control zone will be needed around an infected premise to contain the risk of the virus spreading.

If my birds do not die from avian influenza will they need to be destroyed?

Yes, federal legislation requires domestic birds with avian influenza be destroyed. This approach also prevents further suffering in affected birds, as the virus causes severe symptoms.

How can I protect my birds from getting avian influenza?

Protecting poultry means doing everything you can to lessen the chance that you (or others) bring avian influenza to the birds on your clothing, boots, hands or equipment, or by bringing in new birds that are already infected.

You also need to protect your poultry from direct contact with wild birds or contact with areas where wild birds have been.

To understand how to protect poultry, it is important to understand how the birds could be exposed to Avian Flu.

- Exposure to the virus can happen:
 - via contact with wild birds or contact with areas where wild birds have been;
 - via movement of poultry or poultry products from one premises to another, and;
 - via clothing, boots, hands or equipment that has been in contact with wild birds or other domestic birds.
- To protect your domestic birds:
 - Prevent wild birds from being in contact with your poultry and their food and water by keeping your birds indoors or using overhead netting and appropriate fencing;
 - Frequently clean poultry coops, water dishes, feeders, and your clothing and boots;
 - Learn to recognize the signs of avian influenza in your birds:
 - Lack of energy, movement or appetite;

- Decreased egg production;
 - Swelling around the head, neck and eyes;
 - Coughing, gasping for air or sneezing;
 - Nervous signs, tremors, or lack of coordination;
 - Diarrhea; and
 - Sudden death.
- Limit visitors to your farm;
- Do not move birds from one farm to another;
- Do not house birds with swine;
- Avoid having bird feeders / duck ponds close to poultry barns as it attracts wild birds; and
- Protect yourself and your farm workers by wearing PPE when working with sick birds.
- Read the [National Avian On-Farm Biosecurity Standard](#).

Can avian influenza affect other animals on my farm?

Yes. Mammals can also get influenza viruses.

Mammals including dogs and cats (as well as foxes and other wildlife species) are susceptible to influenza viruses and can contract them by scavenging dead bird carcasses or by being fed raw meat from infected poultry, wild or game birds.

Pigs can get influenza and some influenza viruses are adapted to pigs, earning the name swine influenza or swine flu. Housing for pigs and birds needs to be separate to ensure the viruses do not pass from one species to the other.

Always keep bird carcasses away from other animals.

