

ANIMAL HEALTH PROGRAM – POULTRY DEALERS

Additional Information for Poultry Dealers

As you know, we continue to see rapid growth of the backyard poultry industry in Maine. Many people new to poultry keeping have realized the joys of nurturing a backyard flock and consider these birds part of the family. To prepare you and your staff for the upcoming season of poultry sales, we would like to share some information and recommendations for a successful and healthy season.

CDC continues to identify new cases and report on the national outbreak of illness caused by the Salmonella bacteria associated with poultry. This intestinal infection can be transmitted by direct contact between people and live poultry, such as chickens and ducks. These birds can carry strains of salmonella that are harmful to people but well tolerated by the bird. Another challenge associated with keeping pet birds is control of external parasites. Some parasites of poultry, such as bed bugs, can be shared by humans. Bringing poultry into the home is not recommended as a key control step for both of these concerns.

To avoid such challenges, please consider the following recommendations as you design your poultry displays:

- Place educational material in clear view where birds are displayed.
- Provide hand washing stations or hand sanitizer next to poultry display areas and tell customers to wash hands right after leaving these areas.
- Display poultry out of reach of customers, especially children, so customers can not easily touch birds.
- Clean the areas where birds are displayed between shipments of new birds. *This is a very important step for human and animal health. These young birds are often stressed from shipment and are more likely to shed infectious agents or be more vulnerable to contracting them.*

Please remind your staff to ALWAYS wash their hands immediately after handling poultry or their environment. This will help your store stay clean and your staff stay healthy.

If you have any questions or would like information on sourcing chicks from Salmonella monitored shippers feel free to contact us at any time.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call us at **(207) 287-3701** or email **AnimalHealth.AGR@maine.gov**.