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USDA Launches New Poultry Biosecurity Outreach Effort Aimed at Youth and Student Audiences
#FlockDefender Provides New Resources and Connections for Young Poultry Owners

Washington, D.C., June 2, 2021 -- The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is launching a new outreach effort specifically aimed at helping youth and student poultry owners learn about and practice good biosecurity. This new effort is called #FlockDefender.

Youth are the future of our nation's poultry farming and industry. The #FlockDefender outreach program shares the agency's existing Defend the Flock message that encourages and prepares all poultry owners to implement diligent biosecurity practices with future and aspiring growers. APHIS provides youth, students and their leaders and teachers with many electronic resources they can use during meetings, classes and when caring for their flocks. APHIS is also encouraging these young poultry enthusiasts to share photos of their poultry or biosecurity practices.

With a growing number of small poultry flocks across the country, now is the time to spread the word to young enthusiasts. It's always best for flock health to have solid biosecurity in place from the very beginning. Making biosecurity an every day, every time practice helps keep poultry healthy and prevent the spread of infectious poultry diseases.

But it's not just youth – **anyone** who works with or raises poultry should follow good biosecurity practices all the time. Some European and Asian countries are dealing with highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreaks right now. These practices will make a difference in protecting your flock, should we face similar circumstances in the future. Here are some tips anyone can follow:

- Choose new birds from National Poultry Improvement Plan participating flocks.
- Quarantine new birds for at least 30 days before introducing them to an existing flock.
- Designate a Line of Separation between your flock and the rest of the world, along with rules for crossing that line.

When launching #FlockDefender, APHIS updated and refreshed the whole Defend the Flock website. You can explore the site, the campaign resources and more detailed biosecurity information at www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth/defendtheflock.