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**Biosecurity Reminder**

Recent HPAI in commercial poultry detection of 2017 serves as a reminder

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On March 5<sup>th</sup> the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced the first case of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in a Tennessee commercial chicken breeder flock. The virus has been identified as North American wild bird lineage H7N9 HPAI. **This is NOT the same as the China H7N9 virus that has impacted poultry and infected humans in Asia.** The virus is known to have been circulating in the wild bird population and likely came from a wild bird source into the farm.

Although the response and containment was quick and successful, it should serve as a reminder to all poultry owners that biosecurity is the key to preventing HPAI from affecting your flock. While biosecurity is important at all times of the year, the changing seasons present a higher risk and everyone in the poultry community should be alert as temperatures rise and the wild birds continue to migrate north. We recommend that you take time to review your flock's biosecurity and make any adjustments necessary. If you need further information about specific biosecurity steps you can take for your flock please visit our website at [http://www.maine.gov/dacf/ahw/animal\\_health/#hpa1](http://www.maine.gov/dacf/ahw/animal_health/#hpa1) to find several helpful resources.

Some key points to consider when addressing biosecurity for your flock:

- Separate sick animals from healthy animals.
- Create a line of separation and keep visitors to a minimum on the "clean side" of this line.
- Control vehicle traffic onto the farm and wash or disinfect vehicles entering areas where animals have access.
- Provide either disposable coveralls or barn-specific clothing for necessary visitors.
- Provide either disposable boots, a boot wash or barn-specific boots for necessary visitors.
- Clean and disinfect any tools or equipment before bringing them across your line of separation.
- Always wash your hands and use separate clothing and footwear when you enter the "clean side."
- When in doubt, disinfect.

All bird owners, whether commercial producers or backyard enthusiasts, should continue to practice good biosecurity, prevent contact between their birds and wild birds, and report sick birds or unusual bird deaths to State/Federal officials, either through our office at 207-592-6698 or through USDA's toll-free number at 1-866-536-7593.

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