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Advisory for Live Poultry Events in Maine
Spring 2023

Due to the ongoing outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in the United States, Animal Health Officials from all six New England States are recommending postponing live bird events including competitions, exhibitions, shows, swaps, and other activities that encourage the commingling of domestic birds. The recommendation to postpone live bird events is through July 1, 2023, pending additional updates. The risk assessment for HPAI transmission is ongoing and dependent on dynamic factors such as weather and wild bird migratory patterns. As the seasons change, adjustments to our recommendations and flock management practices may become necessary to protect birds.

The incidence of HPAI in Maine's domestic birds has slowed in recent weeks, but [surveillance data](#) collected from Maine's wild birds demonstrates that the HPAI virus is still present. Most cases of HPAI in domestic birds are believed to be caused by introduction of virus from infected wild birds, most commonly waterfowl. Migration of these infected wild birds increases the risk posed to domestic flocks. With these factors in mind, enhanced biosecurity practices are recommended this Spring, including postponing live bird events. Please visit the Maine DACF [Avian Influenza website](#) for up-to-date information on bird health, biosecurity practice, education events and status updates.

Learn more [HERE](#) about the signs of HPAI and the management steps you can take to decrease the chance of exposing your domestic birds to this virus. For those poultry enthusiasts who do participate in or visit live bird events this season, please consider the following guidelines:

- If your flock at home is not healthy, DO NOT go to a poultry event. You or your clothes and footwear could carry germs into this environment.
- Minimize contact with the birds on exhibit and with their environments.
- Wash your hands on the way into and out of the exhibit.
- Keep gallinaceous birds (chickens, turkeys, guinea fowl etc.) physically separate from waterfowl at the exhibit or consider not bringing waterfowl to the exhibit.
- Be prepared to respond to suspect or confirmed cases of influenza: document show participant information, plan for restricting access to the exhibition barn and keep contact information for state and local veterinarians handy.

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