

Avian Influenza

Where to Get Help

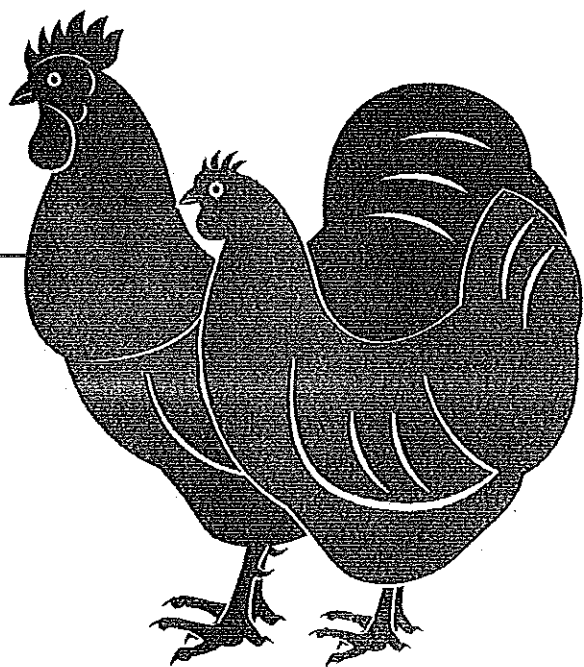
Where do I get help when I suspect a health problem in my poultry flock?

The Pennsylvania Animal Diagnostic Laboratory System has several university-based veterinarians with advanced training and expertise in poultry diseases. They deal with all types of avian health problems, from the common to the unusual, and can help sort out individual bird problems from those that may cause sickness in the entire flock. Diseases that may spread to other animals and people can also be identified. Conditions that may impact food safety of poultry meat and eggs can be detected or ruled out. Please contact either of the labs below for consultation, preferably the one nearer your location:

Penn State Animal Diagnostic Laboratory
University Park, PA (Centre County)
Phone: 814-863-0837
vbs.psu.edu/adl

New Bolton Center Laboratory of Avian Medicine and Pathology, University of Pennsylvania
Kennett Square, PA (Chester County)
Phone: 610-444-5800 ext. 6710
www.vet.upenn.edu/research/academic-departments/pathobiology/avian-medicine-and-pathology

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) Bureau of Animal Health and Diagnostic Services also has veterinarians on staff in the roles of keeping birds healthy and preventing disease spread. Some are based at the main offices in Harrisburg, and there are staff in each of seven regions in the state. You may know the PDA veterinarian in your region from fairs or certified poultry technician training courses. Contact phone information for these offices are as follows:



State Veterinarian, Harrisburg
717-772-2852

extension.psu.edu/flock-help

Regional PDA Veterinarians

1. Northwest (Meadville): 814-332-6890
2. North Central (Montoursville): 570-433-2640 ext. 2
3. Northeast (Tunkhannock): 570-836-2181
4. Southwest (Greensburg) 724-832-1073
5. Central (Martinsburg): 814-793-1849 ext.218
6. South Central (Harrisburg): 717-836-3237
7. Southeast (Collegeville): 610-489-1003

The United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) has a national toll-free hotline to report significant illness or deaths consistent with avian influenza and exotic Newcastle disease, both highly contagious viral diseases. These signs can include sudden death without clinical signs; lack of energy or appetite; decreased egg production; soft-shelled or misshapen eggs; swelling or purple discoloration of head, eyelids, comb, hocks; nasal discharge; coughing; sneezing; incoordination;

and diarrhea. If applicable to your situation, call the USDA Healthy Birds Hotline at 866-536-7593. Callers will be routed to a state or federal veterinarian in Pennsylvania for a case assessment.

Penn State Extension has experts in many other areas of keeping poultry, including breeding, incubation, genetics, judging, nutrition, housing, ventilation, etc. Many health problems are related to these factors rather than infectious disease agents alone. For contact information, go to extension.psu.edu/animals/poultry/directory.

Private-practice veterinarians who are known to work with poultry patients may also be contacted, especially with reference to a single bird with specific problems. The university-based veterinarians above are available as a resource for private-practice vets to help guide sample selection and diagnostic tests.

What else should I do when I suspect a health problem in my poultry flock?

If birds are dying, the dead should be double-bagged and refrigerated for possible testing. Meanwhile, until the problem is investigated further, diagnosed, and/or resolved, put your flock on "voluntary quarantine." This means operating as a closed flock during this time. Do not buy, sell, trade, or otherwise move birds to or from your premises. Do not visit other flocks, poultry auctions, or shows, or receive visitors who have their own birds. These measures will help prevent potential disease-causing agents from being transmitted to other flocks and new agents from being introduced into yours. A general resource for backyard bird health information is online at www.healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov.

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