



August 24, 2015

PENNSYLVANIA BULLETIN NO. PA 130-15-1

SUBJECT: Additional Biosecurity Protocols for Avian Influenza (AI) Operations

Purpose: Provide additional instructions in response to the Avian Influenza(AI) affecting the poultry industry as per Title 130- Agency General, Part 403 Subpart H, Biosecurity Procedures and Guidelines, Section 480.3(a)(5) issued under General Manual, PA-130-AGN, Amendment No. 3 dated February 1, 2007.

Background: Avian Influenza (AI) experts predict the migratory birds will bring AI to Pennsylvania this fall. To date, no cases of Avian Influenza (AI) have been found within Pennsylvania. The migratory birds are expected to carry the disease and the cooler fall weather will allow the disease to easily spread. Across the US, over 230 commercial flocks and 20 backyard flocks have been destroyed to date due to AI, 50,000,000 birds in 21 states.

It is believed that AI spreads in a variety of ways including:

- carried by migratory birds
- carried by local birds and rodents
- carried up to a mile radius by air borne dust
- carried by vehicles or people using poor biosecurity methods
- carried from farm to farm when farmers share egg crates

Effective biosecurity activities will need to target all of the above methods of disease transport.

Methods of disposal of infected flocks of birds have included; composting within the affected poultry house, composting outside, burial, landfill, rendering, and incineration.

NRCS Field Offices may be asked to provide advice on soils recommendations for suitable burial sites for infected poultry flock. Soils information can be received from the Web Soils Survey and questions in regards to appropriate soils for burial can be directed to the NRCS Resource Soil Scientists or the State Soil Scientist.

If an AI outbreak occurs in Pennsylvania, it is expected that PA Department of Agriculture and APHIS will enforce a system of restricted zones around each affected farm limiting access to the farm and surrounding farms. In that case, many people including NRCS personnel will be restricted from entering the restricted zone.

Attached is an HPAI (Avian Influenza) Biosecurity Checklist which is written to assist poultry farmers with managing their farm operation in regards to AI. This was written by US Department of Agriculture for farmer use. Feel free to circulate to farmers as needed. Encourage poultry farmers to practice all of the biosecurity practices that are being recommended by their industry. In addition, their industry is recommending that each farmer prepare a site specific "Flock Plan" to be followed in case of an AI outbreak on their farm.

Action: NRCS staff will implement the following additional Biosecurity Protocols for poultry operations and will relay this information to partners to prevent or diminish the chance that agency personal or vehicles will transmit this virus or any other disease associated with the poultry industry.

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Additional NRCS Biosecurity Protocols for Poultry Operations

- Postpone poultry farm visits when possible.
- Pay attention during all farm visits for any 'barnyard' chickens. This should be 'counted' as a visit to a poultry farm.
- NRCS employees with backyard poultry /game birds or involved with caring for commercial poultry must exercise extreme care.
- NRCS employees who visits areas frequented by migratory ducks and geese must also exercise extreme care.
- When sharing vehicles, leave a note in the vehicle stating when the last visit to a poultry farm was.
- Do not visit more than one poultry farm in a day.
- When scheduling a visit ask what biosecurity measures the farmer has in place. Be prepared to provide information on the last time you or the vehicle you will be using was on a poultry farm. If a visit to a poultry farm is already scheduled, call and ask if they have any special concerns in light of the AI.
- Ask where you should park before arriving at the farm. Do not park in front of fans or areas of higher dust accumulation. Parking at the end of the driveway on the edge of the road is warranted in some cases.
- Wash boots before and after farm visit or wear plastic booties and leave them on the farm (ask the farmer where to leave them).
- If you find that a farm you visited was diagnosed with the AI soon after your visit, contact any other poultry farms that you visited that week to tell them of your visit to the infected farm.
- Vehicles must be kept clean, inside and outside.
- NRCS employees do not need to go inside a poultry house, and in many cases our work can be accomplished from a location distant from the poultry buildings.
- Most of the above items are good practice for any time regardless of AI threat level.
- Farmers with immediate AI concerns should be directed to USDA-APHIS at 866-536-7593 or Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture State Veterinarian at 717-772-2852. A Penn state Extension Fact Sheet is attached.
- Follow any additional protocols put out by USDA-APHIS and/or the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture State Veterinarian



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State Conservationist

Attachment:

- (1) Avian Influenza -- Where to Get Help
- (2) HPAI Biosecurity Checklist