

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

Dateline – January 2015 -- The WSDA veterinarians are very busy working with the USDA to control the outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in backyard birds in Washington. How are they doing this? First, they are testing and euthanizing affected birds/flocks. Second, they are assisting with cleaning and disinfection of affected premises. Third, they set up a quarantine zone that limits animals and product movements. From the WSDA website: “Birds affected by this quarantine include domestic fowl and game birds that are raised in confinement such as chickens, turkeys, ratites, waterfowl, pigeons, doves, guineafowl, peafowl, pheasants, partridge, chukars, quail, and grouse of all ages and their hatching eggs. Poultry products include any poultry commodity or material that can spread HPAI including meat (fresh or frozen), blood or meal, feathers, litter/manure and eggs.”

What are the signs of HPAI? The clinical signs of birds affected with all forms of AI may show one or more of the following: Sudden death without clinical signs; Lack of energy and appetite; Decreased egg production; Soft-shelled or misshapen eggs; Swelling of the head, eyelids, comb, wattles, and hocks; Purple discoloration of the wattles, combs, and legs; Nasal discharge; Coughing, sneezing; Lack of coordination; and Diarrhea. If you see any of these conditions in your birds, call the WSDA at 1-800-606-3056 or USDA at 1-866-536-7593. For more on WHAT IS AI? See the USDA website for pictures of affected birds and more on the disease.

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/birdbiosecurity/AI/DownDown Downloadable videos and information are located at: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/birdbiosecurity/about/downloads.htm

For disease prevention in birds, see the USDA site on biosecurity for the birds. There are several videos on keeping birds healthy as well as keeping things clean: <http://healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov/> and for a booklet: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/2014/pub_bioguide_poultry_bird.pdf

Simple things to remember about disease prevention (from USDA) are:

- Keep your distance-Isolate your birds from visitors and other birds. [This means that your birds cannot be affected by wild birds or their feces.]
- Keep it clean-Prevent germs from spreading by cleaning shoes, tools and equipment.
- Don't haul disease home-Also clean vehicles and cages.
- Don't borrow disease from your neighbor-Avoid sharing tools and equipment with neighbors.

- Know the warning signs of infectious bird diseases-Watch for early signs to prevent the spread of disease
- Report sick birds-Report unusual signs of disease or unexpected deaths.
- Making biosecurity a part of your daily routine while caring for your birds can decrease the chance of AI showing up on your doorstep.

For WSDA updates on this disease in Washington, and WHO TO CALL visit their website at:

<http://agr.wa.gov/News/2015/15-03.aspx>

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