
INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
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Ministry of Agriculture and Food

Small flock in Comox Valley tests positive for avian influenza

VICTORIA – The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has confirmed that a small poultry flock in the Comox Valley has tested positive for the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza virus, which is the first case on Vancouver Island.

The infected premises has been placed under quarantine by the CFIA, and B.C.'s Ministry of Agriculture and Food has notified producers within a 12-kilometre radius about the positive test results.

Seven small or backyard flocks have contracted the virus in B.C., presumably through contact with infected migrating wild birds. Owners of small or backyard flocks are urged to continue to be vigilant and have appropriate preventative measures in place.

Measures include eliminating or reducing opportunities for poultry to encounter wild birds, reducing human access to the flock and increased cleaning, disinfection and sanitization of all things (including clothing and footwear) when entering areas where flocks are housed.

Since April 2022, small or backyard poultry flocks have tested positive for avian influenza in Kelowna, Richmond, Armstrong and the central Kootenays.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food continues to work closely with the CFIA and B.C. poultry producers to ensure enhanced prevention and preparedness measures are in place to protect poultry flocks. The first confirmation of H5N1 in B.C. poultry was at a commercial producer in the Regional District of North Okanagan in mid-April. A general order requiring commercial poultry producers with 100 or more birds to keep birds indoors has also been extended until June 13, 2022.

Avian influenza is a federally regulated disease and the CFIA leads the investigation and response with provincial support for testing, mapping, surveillance and disposal.

Wild birds have also tested positive for H5 strains of avian influenza in or near 100 Mile House, Bowen Island, Chilliwack, Kelowna, Metro Vancouver, Vanderhoof and Williams Lake.

The Wild Bird Mortality Investigation Program toll-free hotline, 1 866 431-2473, accepts reports of dead wild birds from the public.

Learn More:

Ministry of Agriculture and Food information on avian influenza, including what to watch for, resources for small flock owners, deputy chief veterinarian orders and information on testing: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/animals-and-crops/animal->

[health/reportable-notifiable-diseases/avian-influenza-ai](https://inspection.canada.ca/health/reportable-notifiable-diseases/avian-influenza-ai)

CFIA information on current state of avian influenza in Canada:

<https://inspection.canada.ca/animal-health/terrestrial-animals/diseases/reportable/avian-influenza/response-to-detections-of-highly-pathogenic-avian-/eng/1640207916497/1640207916934>

CFIA factsheet on avian influenza: <https://inspection.canada.ca/animal-health/terrestrial-animals/diseases/reportable/avian-influenza/fact-sheet/eng/1356193731667/1356193918453>

B.C.'s Animal Health Centre reopens the centre's foreign animal disease laboratory following November 2021 flooding: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/26742>

Visit Environment Canada for guidance on using and maintaining birdfeeders and birdbaths: <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-game-bird-hunting/avian-influenza-wild-birds.html#toc3>

Contacts:

Dave Townsend
Government Communications and Public
Engagement
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
250 356-7098
250 889-5945 (cell)

Media Relations
Canadian Food Inspection Agency
cfia.media.acia@inspection.gc.ca
613-773-6600

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