



INDIANA STATE BOARD OF ANIMAL HEALTH

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Michael R. Pence, Governor
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NOTE TO MEDIA: Direct all media inquiries, including interview requests, to the Indiana Joint Information Center (JIC) at: 317-238-1784 or email: jic@jic.in.gov
General updates are available online at: www.in.gov/boah/2390.htm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Highly Pathogenic H7N8 Avian Influenza Diagnosed in Indiana Poultry Flock

INDIANAPOLIS (15 January 2016)—The Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) has been notified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Veterinary Services Laboratory that poultry from a commercial turkey farm in Dubois County has tested positive for highly pathogenic **H7N8** avian influenza.

Avian influenza does not present a food safety risk; poultry and eggs are safe to eat. The Centers for Disease Control considers the risk of illness to humans to be very low.

A company veterinarian delivered samples from the flock to the laboratory for testing, after several hundred birds died.

“This finding of highly pathogenic H7N8 is unique to Indiana and the nation,” said Indiana State Veterinarian Bret D. Marsh, DVM. “This strain is unrelated to those identified in the Upper Midwest in 2015, nor is it related to the HPAI case identified in a Northeastern Indiana backyard poultry flock that was affected last May.”

Indiana Governor Mike Pence stated, “Indiana is one of the largest poultry states in America, and I have directed all relevant agencies to bring the full resources of the state of Indiana to bear on containing and resolving the issue as quickly as possible. Multiple state agencies have been heavily focused for nearly a year on the necessary steps in this type of event, including the State Board of Animal Health, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, Indiana Department of Homeland Security, Indiana Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Indiana State Poultry Association, and several private sector partners. Hoosiers can be assured that we are taking all precautions to contain the situation and minimize the effects to Indiana’s robust poultry industry.”

Indiana’s poultry industry ranks fourth nationally in turkey production, first in duck production, third in eggs, and is a significant producer of broiler chickens. The poultry industry employs more than 14,000 Hoosiers and is valued at \$2.5 billion.

REPORTING

Backyard poultry owners are encouraged to be aware of the signs of avian influenza and report illness and/or death to the **USDA Healthy Birds Hotline: 866-536-7593**. Callers will be routed to a state or federal veterinarian in Indiana for a case assessment. Dead birds should be double-bagged and refrigerated for possible testing.

Signs 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;

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coughing; sneezing; incoordination; and diarrhea. A great resource for backyard bird health information is online at: www.healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov

UPDATES and INFORMATION:

Situation updates and status reports about ongoing avian influenza activities, along with critical disease-related information, will be posted online at: www.in.gov/boah/2390.htm . Users may subscribe to email updates on a link at that page.

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BACKGROUND:

This marks the first case of HPAI in Indiana in 2016. While the disease was found on 219 sites in 16 states in the United States last year, Indiana had only one backyard flock of 76 birds affected in 2015. This event marks the first case in a commercial flock in Indiana.