

State of Indiana Status Update for H5N1 HPAI National Milk Testing Strategy

(6 May 2025)

Update #2

This update from the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) is the first focused on testing milk from Indiana Grade A dairy farms under USDA's National Milk Testing Strategy (NMTS). Future updates will be sent if the H5N1 virus is confirmed on a farm by the USDA National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) or Indiana successfully accomplishes all the requirements of the current NMTS stage and will be advancing. Indiana is currently at NMTS stage 2 until three consecutive rounds of testing with no H5N1 confirmations is achieved.

Updates with subsequent test results will be reported on the [BOAH website in a dashboard](#) specific to this program.

SURVEILLANCE UPDATE

Round #: 2

Start and End Dates: April 17, 2025 – May 2, 2025

Percentage of Eligible Grade A dairies tested: 98%

Number of NVSL-confirmed farms: 0

Total number of NVSL-confirmed farms to date: 0

Number of NVSL-confirmed farms actively quarantined: 0

STATEWIDE SUMMARY

For details, including data and total statewide findings since Indiana began surveillance under USDA's National Milk Testing Strategy (NMTS) in March 2025, visit BOAH's info page about [H5N1 Influenza in Cattle](#). To subscribe to these updates, visit the [BOAH e-newsletter subscription page](#).

BACKGROUND

The H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) virus has been identified on more than 1600 poultry premises in all 50 states since February 2022. The virus has also been identified in various wild species of birds and mammals. Wild birds were the initial source of infection for the first detection of HPAI in dairy cows in Texas in March 2024. Since then, H5N1 has been identified on more than 1000 dairy farms

in 18 states. Some human H5N1 cases—attributed primarily to exposure from working on an affected farm—have been identified in the United States.

The current, ongoing HPAI event is the United States' largest animal health emergency in the nation's history.

MILK TESTING: In late 2024, the US Department of Agriculture announced a nationwide surveillance plan to identify cases of H5N1 on dairy farms, thereby allowing states to verify the presence or absence of the disease. The National Milk Testing Strategy (NMTS) is a five-stage program that is based on confirmed detections of the H5N1 virus in unpasteurized milk, with a goal to eliminate the disease from the US dairy cattle population.

The Indiana State Board of Animal Health began collecting milk samples for testing in March 2025 under stage 2 of the NMTS. Indiana's process is to test unpasteurized milk samples collected as part of routine farm-level quality testing on Grade A dairy farms. This method provides the most efficient and effective way to identify individual farms where the virus is present.

Milk samples are screened for the virus at the Indiana Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory. Non-negative samples are forwarded to the USDA NVSL for confirmation. BOAH follows up with additional regulatory testing on any farms with confirmed results from NVSL.

RESPONSE PLAN: When H5N1 is confirmed on a dairy farm, BOAH issues a quarantine for all lactating dairy cows on the site. Based on [BOAH's response plan](#), farm-level testing will be conducted weekly until lactating cattle in the herd complete two consecutive, negative tests, at which time the quarantine will be released.

All Grade A dairies and commercial poultry premises within a 10-km Surveillance Zone (SZ) around the H5N1-positive farm will also be tested to verify no community spread. SZ testing will continue every 28 days until the quarantined farm is cleared.

ADDITIONAL SURVEILLANCE: Under a USDA federal order, lactating dairy cattle must have a negative test before interstate movements. Producers should consult their herd veterinarian to arrange testing.

USDA Wildlife Services and Indiana Department of Natural Resources are assisting with surveillance of wild birds in and near infected herds. Data about [detections of HPAI in wild birds](#) may be found online.

PUBLIC ADVISORIES

Food Safety

Avian influenza *does not present a food safety risk*; cooked poultry, beef, eggs and pasteurized dairy products are safe to eat. Pasteurization has been proven to kill the H5N1 virus.

Cats are particularly susceptible to the H5N1 virus. Pet owners are advised not to feed under- and/or uncooked diets.

Cattle Health

Cattle owners who notice signs of avian influenza in their cows should contact their herd veterinarian. Clinical signs include: reduced milk production, change in milk consistency, decreased appetite, diarrhea, lethargy, dehydration, and fever.

Wild Bird Health

Indiana Department of Natural Resources has [information online](#) about HPAI in wild birds. Sick or dead wild birds should be reported to the [DNR online](#).

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Human Health

Recent detections of highly pathogenic avian influenza A H5N1 viruses in wild birds, poultry and cattle pose a low risk to the health of the general public. Human infections are most likely to be rare and happen in people with recreational or occupational exposures involving prolonged, unprotected close contact with infected birds, infected cattle or contaminated environments. The Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) and local health departments (LHD) monitor people who have been exposed to test-positive animals for signs of influenza-like illness.

IDOH offers [guidance documents](#) for farmers to protect their health.

Mental Health

Community members who are affected by this animal health emergency should be aware of the possible impact on their mental health and seek assistance if needed. Available resources include:

- Be Well Indiana: Feeling overwhelmed, stressed, anxious or alone? Call this free, confidential resource available 24/7 to anyone in the state of Indiana.
 - Call 2-1-1 and enter your ZIP code.
 - Follow the prompts and select number 3 for the Be Well Crisis Helpline.
- Farm Aid: This organization connects farmers with helpful services, resources and opportunities specific to their individual needs. Call the Farmer Hotline for immediate assistance Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 10:00 PM Eastern time.
 - Call 1-800-FARM-AID (1-800-327-6243).
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, as well as prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones.
 - Dial 9-8-8 or call 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).

ABOUT INDIANA DAIRY PRODUCTION

Indiana is a leading producer of dairy products. With more than 670 farms, Indiana ranks number 15 in milk production nationally. In 2024, Indiana produced more than 4.51 billion pounds of milk.

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Important Note:

Details disclosed here will be updated on BOAH's website after test results are confirmed at the USDA National Veterinary Services Laboratory. This policy will keep BOAH's website consistent with USDA's reporting and avoid impacting international trade.

Ongoing/Latest Updates:

Updates are available [online at BOAH's website](#). Situation Updates are available by [subscribing online](#).

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