

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) What You Need to Know About Bird Flu

What is Bird Flu?

Bird flu is a disease caused by infection with avian (bird) influenza (flu) viruses. Some subtypes of the virus including H5N1 can be highly deadly in birds. Bird flu has been spreading globally among wild birds for many years can be carried by free-flying waterfowl, waterbirds, and shorebirds, but can also infect raptors (eagles, falcons, and owls), corvids (crows, ravens), domestic poultry (including chickens, turkeys, pheasants, and quail), and mammals (including cats, foxes, bears). Songbirds, including cardinals and robins, do not appear to be highly susceptible to infection at this time.

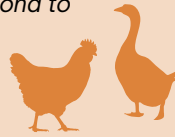
For the latest information in New Jersey visit: <https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/highly-pathogenic-avian-influenza/>



Who's at Risk? Currently, the risk to humans is low.

People who have occupational (work) or recreational (hobby) exposure to birds and animal species that may be infected with bird flu are at greater risk:

- Wildlife rehabilitation workers
- Farmworkers (including dairy farms)
- People who raise flocks of birds
- Livestock owners
- Professionals who respond to bird flu outbreaks
- Veterinarians
- Hunters



Do I Need to Report a Sick or Dead Bird?

Yes - New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife biologists are tracking the prevalence of HPAI in wild birds including eagles, hawks, falcons, crows, wild geese, and ducks. Report **sick or dead wild birds online** (especially groups of 5 or more). Photos can also be shared online. **Prefer to call?** Contact 1-877-WARNDEP.

Will it be tested? At this time, New Jersey will not routinely test individual birds but is focused on highly susceptible and imperiled wildlife species including bald eagles. Once the presence of the virus has been established in an area, additional testing may not be necessary.

Wild Bird Disease Reporting Form

Welcome to the Wild Bird Disease Reporting Form



Scan the QR code or visit tinyurl.com/report-dep

Livestock and poultry owners

should report unexplained illness or deaths to the **New Jersey Department of Agriculture** at 609-671-6400.

Tips to Stay Safe:

- **Avoid direct contact with wild birds.** Deceased birds can be disposed of using personal protective equipment (PPE). Getting rid of dead birds the right way prevents bird flu from spreading. 
- **Keep pets away** from wild birds, poultry, and cattle. There have been reports of HPAI illness in domestic pets. 
- **Do not** drink or eat raw milk, raw milk products, or undercooked beef, poultry or eggs or feed to your pets. **Pasteurized milk products** (like milk and cheese) **are safe** due to the pasteurization process which **eliminates** harmful pathogens. 
- **Cook** poultry, poultry products (including eggs), and beef to the **recommended temperatures** to kill bacteria and viruses including avian influenza viruses.

How to Safely Dispose of Dead Birds

Proper disposal helps protect people, reduces exposure to other birds, and prevents scavenging by wildlife.

- Wear **personal protective equipment**, including disposable waterproof gloves, a face mask (N95), and safety glasses/face shield.
- **Avoid direct contact** by using a tool such as a shovel, rake, or tongs. **Never** use bare hands.
- **Place the bird in a plastic bag**, then put that bag into a **second bag**. Securely close the outer bag with a zip-tie or knot and place it in a secure trash container where pets and other wildlife cannot reach it.
- **Remove and dispose of gloves first.** Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water. **Discard** face mask.
- **Disinfect** any non-disposable items such as safety glasses, shoes, and tools with a 10% bleach solution.

Additional Resources

[Recommended Temperatures for Food Safety](#)
[Resources for Livestock and Poultry Owners](#)
[Resources for Pet Owners](#)

[Bird Feeder Hygiene](#)
[United States HPAI Statistics](#)

Updated 2/25/26

Contractual Health Agency for:
Bernards Township
Bernardsville Borough
Chester Borough
Long Hill Township
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Bernards Township Health Department
www.bernardshealth.org