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For Immediate Release

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Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Detected in Nebraska Poultry

LINCOLN –The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA), in conjunction with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has detected the first cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in 2025. The first case was discovered in a backyard poultry flock in Kearney County and the second case was discovered in a backyard flock in Nance County.

State Veterinarian Dr. Roger Dudley reminds producers to practice good biosecurity with their flocks including minimizing exposure to wild birds and washing hands and changing clothes (including shoes) before and after coming into contact with poultry.

What is HPAI?

HPAI is a highly contagious virus that spreads easily among birds through nasal and eye secretions, as well as infected food, water, and manure. The virus can be spread in various ways from flock to flock, including by wild birds during migratory season, through contact with infected poultry, by equipment, and on the clothing and shoes of caretakers. Wild birds can carry the virus without becoming sick, while domesticated birds can become very sick and die.

What are the clinical signs of HPAI in birds?

Symptoms of HPAI in poultry include: a decrease in water consumption; lack of energy and appetite; decreased egg production or soft-shelled, misshapen eggs; nasal discharge, coughing, sneezing; incoordination; and diarrhea. HPAI can also cause sudden death in birds even if they aren't showing any other symptoms. HPAI can survive for weeks in contaminated environments.

Resources for poultry producers

Resources are available for poultry producers at nda.nebraska.gov/animal/avian/ and from the USDA at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza>. Poultry experiencing signs of HPAI or unusual death should be reported to NDA at 402-471-2351 or the USDA at 866-536-7593.

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