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# *General Public Notice*

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## **Prevent Disease in Backyard Flocks and Pet Birds**

OTTAWA, October 22, 2015: **There is a significant threat of the re-emergence of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in the fall of 2015 that has the potential to negatively impact the health and welfare of poultry. The implementation of preventative biosecurity practices can reduce this risk.**

In 2014–2015, HPAI resulted in the depopulation of approximately 250,000 birds in Canada, in addition to more than 47.5 million chickens and 7.1 million turkeys in the United States (U.S.). In Canada, HPAI was found in 3 commercial flocks in Ontario, as well as 11 commercial and 2 backyard flocks in British Columbia; HPAI was also found in 223 premises in the U.S.

**Biosecurity is the bird owner's first line of defence against all infectious avian disease, including HPAI.**

Wild birds can carry diseases without showing symptoms, so the migration season is a good time to review the biosecurity measures you have in place and make any needed adjustments. Simple, inexpensive practices can be very effective at keeping these serious diseases away from your birds.

1. **Prevent contact with wild birds and other animals** – Cover feed and water areas and keep stores of food in sealed containers.
2. **Keep things clean** – Routinely and thoroughly clean and disinfect anything that comes into contact with your birds, like egg trays, cages, boots, tools or equipment.
3. **Limit contact with visitors** – People can carry animal diseases from one place to another by means of clothing or shoes. If visitors do interact with your birds, good precautionary practices include providing shoe or boot covers, ensuring clothing is clean, and providing a wash station or hand sanitizer for people to use when entering and leaving the property.
4. **Isolate new birds and sick birds** – Recommended isolation periods are from two weeks to a month. Consult a veterinarian to make sure birds are healthy before they are allowed to mingle with the rest of your flock.
5. **Know about and monitor symptoms of illness** – Speak with a veterinarian if you suspect your birds are sick.

Although many disease prevention measures are likely already in place on your farm, it is important to review them regularly. Bird owners are encouraged to contact the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) if they have questions about biosecurity for their backyard flocks. Whether your farm is for fun, for profit or for self-sufficiency, there are plenty of resources on the CFIA website about protecting your flock. Check out: [www.inspection.gc.ca/biosecurity/birds](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/biosecurity/birds).

Here are some other useful links:

- the CFIA video entitled [Bird Health Basics](#);
- the CFIA [Biosecurity Checklist](#) for farms of all sizes; and
- a list of local CFIA [Animal Health Offices](#) that bird owners can contact for more information.

Your municipal office may also provide information on backyard flock regulations in your area.

In addition, anyone who finds a dead wild bird is encouraged to contact the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (CWHC) at 1-866-544-4744 or visit the CWHC website at [www.cwhc-rsf.ca](http://www.cwhc-rsf.ca).

Canada's wild bird survey is part of global efforts to detect HPAI viruses that could threaten human and animal health and to identify and monitor changes in [Avian Influenza](#) viruses circulating in wild birds. The survey is an important part of Canada's Avian Influenza prevention and preparedness strategy.

The logo for the Government of Canada, featuring the word "Canada" in a serif font with a small red maple leaf icon above the letter "a".