

# THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



## Department of Agricultural Resources

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### POULTRY ALERT

March 19, 2015

Over the last few weeks there have been multiple identifications of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in multiple states. Both wild birds and domestic birds have been found to be susceptible. The states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, Minnesota, Missouri, Arkansas, and Kansas have had confirmed cases.

The current situation is believed to have resulted from bird to bird contact in the winter feeding areas of wild migratory birds and the subsequent seasonal movement of these birds along their normal migratory pathways. These normal migratory patterns could result in the introduction of HPAI on the East Coast, whether now or later.

The Department of Agricultural Resources, Division of Animal Health is taking this opportunity to alert veterinarians, producers, hobbyists and all other bird owners to this serious threat. MDAR recommends strict biosecurity practices to minimize contact between domestic poultry including waterfowl and wild birds and wild waterfowl.

Clinical signs of Avian Influenza in birds include: respiratory disease, coughing, sneezing, and snicking; decreased egg production; swollen heads; swollen or discolored wattles or combs; or sudden mortality. Flock owners in the affected states have reported sudden dramatic mortality increases in their flocks with no other apparent signs.

It is critically important that owners of flocks experiencing any of these clinical signs immediately notify their veterinarian or state or federal animal health officials. Prompt notification will assist in early detection of the pathogen and hopefully limit the spread of the disease.

The Division of Animal Health can be reached at 617-626-1795.

Additional Information regarding Avian Influenza can be found at:

USDA-Avian Influenza - [www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth)

MDAR Avian Influenza - [www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/animal-health/poultry/avian-influenza.html](http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/animal-health/poultry/avian-influenza.html)

National Turkey Federation - <http://www.eatturkey.com/pressroom/ai>