

ANIMAL HEALTH INFORMATION

Biosecurity for Poultry Exhibitors & Exhibitions

MA Department of Agricultural Resources, Division of Animal Health
100 Cambridge Street, Boston, MA 02114 Phone: 617/626-1795 Website: www.mass.gov/agr

All poultry exhibitors and managers of poultry exhibitions are advised to take precautions to protect flocks against two serious poultry diseases.

Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) is a respiratory disease of poultry, turkeys, gamebirds and waterfowl. Symptoms of low pathogenic AI are typically mild and in many cases not present. The disease, however, can manifest itself through depression, decreased food consumption, respiratory signs (coughing and sneezing), and a decrease in egg production.

Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) is an acute rapid-spreading contagious respiratory disease of all birds. END is a virus, it is characterized by respiratory distress (gasping), or diarrhea, or encephalitis (brain infection). Birds can die so rapidly that you may not see these signs. END is highly fatal to young chicks and it causes a severe drop in egg production.

The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS), has established a surveillance program for AI/END. Diagnostic services are available through this program at no cost to the flock owner.

Flocks experiencing sudden mortality, respiratory symptoms, or swollen heads should contact the MDAR immediately for assistance in submittal of these birds to the laboratory for necropsy at 617-626-1795.

Outbreaks of Avian Influenza and Exotic Newcastle disease highlight the importance of increased biosecurity at exhibitions. The following biosecurity measures should be followed:

- Exhibitors and show superintendents should evaluate the security on their premises.
- All poultry should be inspected, at least daily to insure they are in good health.
- Only clean shavings, cages, feeders and waters should be used at exhibition.
- Birds should only be purchased from National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) approved flocks.
- Only birds which are currently certified Salmonella Pullorum clean and approved by NPIP may move to exhibition in Massachusetts.
- All birds entering or reentering the exhibitors flock should be isolated from the main flock for a minimum of 10 days.
- Any clothes and footwear, which were worn at the exhibition should be cleaned and washed before you enter your flock.
- All bird carriers should be cleaned of manure and other organics. The carriers should then be disinfected prior to contact with the flock; a solution of 10% bleach and water should be adequate.
- Any time poultry is commingled there is a potential for disease spread. It is your responsibility to apply protections and good management practices which will minimize your risk.