



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF  
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Karen Ross, Secretary

January 16, 2019

## **Recommendation to Cancel California Poultry Exhibitions That Include Birds From Counties Affected With Virulent Newcastle Disease**

Dear Poultry Exhibition Organizers and Managers:

Since May 2018, an outbreak of virulent Newcastle disease (VND) has had a devastating impact on backyard bird populations in four Southern California counties: Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura. The virus has also been found in three commercial facilities in Riverside County. As a result, nearly 500,000 backyard and commercial birds have been euthanized.

Virulent Newcastle disease is a highly contagious respiratory virus in poultry that is nearly always fatal. The only way to stop the spread of the virus and eradicate the disease is to euthanize infected birds, and all birds within highly infected areas. The primary way in which the disease spreads is by seemingly healthy birds being moved. Clinical signs of virulent Newcastle disease include; sudden death and increased death loss in the flock; sneezing; gasping for air; nasal discharge; coughing; greenish, watery diarrhea; decreased activity; tremors; drooping wings; twisting of the head and neck; circling; complete stiffness; and swelling around the eyes and neck. For more information, please visit:

[https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal\\_Health/newcastle\\_disease\\_info.html](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/newcastle_disease_info.html)

**To support our disease containment and eradication efforts, the California State Veterinarian is recommending that all poultry exhibitions that include birds from high-risk counties (Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura) be cancelled.** *An exhibition is an assembly of birds (including but not limited to poultry) brought to the assembly location for purposes that include public display for any duration. For example, exhibitions include, but are not limited to: auctions, shows, swap meets, pet marts, fair exhibits, pigeon races, cock fights, pet stores, and petting zoos. Public zoos are not included in this definition.*

Sincerely,

Dr. Annette Jones  
State Veterinarian  
California Department of Food and Agriculture

