

September 14, 2022

## **Field Biosecurity Guidelines for State/County/City Personnel Entering Shell Egg Packing Facilities, Poultry Harvest Facilities, and Poultry Farms**

To: All California State/County/City Personnel

The risk of disease entering domestic poultry flocks is always present but can be mitigated through actions that interrupt disease transmission (biosecurity). Enhanced biosecurity is critical in the face of ongoing disease outbreaks and wild bird carrier exposure. While we were hoping to see reduced risk to California poultry relative to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) this summer, in the past month we detected our first cases of HPAI in both wild and domestic birds. As of September 14, 2022, there have been 14 detections of HPAI in domestic flocks of birds and 45 detections in wild birds in 16 counties in California. Wild birds in or passing through California are facing the additional stressor of drought which is forcing unusual congregation and movement. Based on current disease surveillance and epidemiology, wild waterfowl and raptors remain the largest threat of Eurasian H5N1 introduction to domestic poultry in California. Continued reports of the current HPAI strain findings are particularly concerning because of the similarities to the spread of HPAI H5N1 in Europe where the virus continued to spill over into domestic poultry beyond a single migration period.

While Avian Influenza is endemic in wild waterfowl, there are factors that increase the risk for HPAI transmission in poultry. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) asks for your assistance and cooperation in preventing the introduction and spread of poultry disease by following some simple biosecurity precautions. With your help we can continue to provide a safe and healthy food supply for Californians. State, County, City, and private inspectors and auditors should adhere to the following:

- 1) When possible, conduct remote or virtual audits.
- 2) If in-person inspections or visits to poultry farms must occur:
  - a. Do not enter farms where eggs are hatched or poultry are raised if you have birds or live poultry at home.
  - b. Never visit any poultry farm within 72 hours of visiting another commercial poultry farm, egg or meat processor; after duck hunting or having had other exposure to wild migratory waterfowl; or visiting any backyard, school, feed store, swap meet, live bird market, pet store, fair, veterinary clinic, zoo, bird hunt club, or other facility which has live poultry or birds.
  - c. Always wash your vehicle including undercarriage and wheel wells before entering a farm/egg processing facility. A commercial car wash can be used for this purpose.



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- i. Park your vehicle in a designated area per the company's biosecurity plan or if there is none, try to park on cement or a paved area away from the production houses.
  - ii. Keep the inside of the vehicle clean and free of any organic material.
- d. Use good personal hygiene measures including freshly laundered clothes and showering before visiting a poultry farm or processing facility. Clothing that has been worn to premises with birds or live poultry should *never* be worn to another farm or processing facility without being laundered between visits.
- e. Never enter a poultry farm unless trained to apply and remove (don and doff) biosecurity clothing without spreading disease. If entering live bird areas, use clean, dedicated rubber boots or disposable plastic shoe covers, disposable coveralls, a mask, disposable gloves and a hair net.
- f. **ALWAYS follow all the biosecurity instructions of the commercial poultry farm/egg processing facility which may include: registering in a logbook, answering queries about bird and poultry premises visited previously, using company supplied protective clothing and footwear, footbaths, hand cleaning stations, tire/truck wash stations and other biosecurity measures.**

CDFA appreciates your efforts to protect poultry health in California on a daily basis. Remember, people, equipment, and vehicles can easily spread dangerous diseases from one location to another.

*For more information about biosecurity, please visit: [cdfa.ca.gov/go/poultrybiosecurity](https://cdfa.ca.gov/go/poultrybiosecurity)*

Sincerely,

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Director and State Veterinarian