

October 15, 2021

Avian Influenza Update and Biosecurity Advisory (Outdoor Access Exemption Request)

To: California Organic Certifiers

The risk of diseases entering flocks is always present but can be mitigated. Enhanced biosecurity is critical in the face of ongoing disease outbreaks and the wild bird migration season. *There have been four incidents of low pathogenic avian influenza detected in domestic poultry this year in Northern California (three farms and one store selling poultry).* Continued reports of the current Avian Influenza outbreak in Europe are also concerning because of the similarities to the spread of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N8 in the 2014-2015 outbreak that occurred here in the United States.

To protect California flocks, we have requested that poultry producers separate their poultry from wild birds if possible. We recommended housing poultry inside and discouraging any interaction with wild birds, particularly migrating waterfowl.

We ask that Organic Certifiers permit California producers to move their birds in during the migration season (through the end of May 2022) and exempt the outdoor access requirement in order to remain certified during this time. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly. Thank you for your cooperation.

For more information about Avian Influenza, please visit:
www.cdfa.ca.gov/go/avianinfluenza

Sincerely,

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

