



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Karen Ross, Secretary

December 17, 2024

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

To: California Organic Certifiers

Detections of HPAI continue to be found in both domestic and wild birds nationally. In November 2024, there were 27 domestic flocks (23 commercial, 4 backyard) that were affected in California. Dairies, wild waterfowl, and raptors remain the largest threats of H5N1 introduction to domestic poultry in California. The risk of disease entering domestic poultry flocks is always present. Enhanced biosecurity is critical in the face of ongoing disease outbreaks and wild bird carrier exposure.

To protect California flocks, we request that poultry producers continue to separate poultry from wild birds and dairy cows if possible. This action is particularly important if there is ANY water in the vicinity that may attract and congregate wild waterfowl or if there are dairy cows on their farm or a shared fence line with a dairy. We recommend housing poultry inside and discouraging any interaction with wild birds, particularly migrating or resident waterfowl and raptors, and dairy cows.

Recent cases in California poultry production show epidemiologic evidence that two strains (one introduced by wild birds and the other by dairy cows) are currently circulating, **so we ask that Organic Certifiers permit California producers to keep their birds indoors through June 2025** and exempt the outdoor access requirement 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

