

FACTSHEET FOR CALIFORNIA POULTRY PRODUCERS

The current outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) began in 2022 and has devastated poultry farms throughout California and the nation. As of December 31, 2024, USDA APHIS implemented a new indemnity strategy to incentivize poultry producers to enhance biosecurity. This means that poultry producers are now required to follow the [Biosecurity Compliance Audit Program \(BCAP\)](#) to receive indemnity payments if they become infected by HPAI. The goal of this program is to significantly reduce or even prevent HPAI infections and reinfections.

Who are Affected?

Commercial poultry farms in buffer zones and previously infected farms.

Who are Exempt?

Small poultry operations, defined as:

- < 75,000 commercial table-egg layers
- < 25,000 egg-type game birds/waterfowl
- < 100,000 broilers raised annually
- < 30,000 meat turkeys raised annually
- < 5,000 breeder birds raised annually

What is a Buffer Zone?

A Control Area is a region designed to contain an animal disease outbreak such as HPAI. The Control Area consists of a central infected zone, surrounded by an uninfected **Buffer Zone**.

What Are the Requirements?

A passing biosecurity audit conducted by a BCAP certified auditor is required before poultry can be moved onto a buffer zone farm or previously infected farm.

How Can I Prepare?

Conduct an internal pre-audit using the USDA Audit Tool to address any deficiencies early. Visit: bit.ly/HPAIBiosecurityAuditTool (case sensitive).

How Do I Schedule an Audit?

Contact your assigned Case Manager or email: SFSPERMITS@CDFA.CA.GOV

Who Conducts the Audit?

Audits are conducted by a team made up of an auditor (CDFA/USDA) and a reviewer (USDA).

Virtual Versus In-Person Audits

Poultry farms within buffer zones are virtually audited and must pass prior to moving poultry onto the farm. Previously infected farms looking to restock must pass an in-person audit, then virtual audits are required every 6 months after the initial in-person audit until California is declared free of HPAI. The type of audit may change at the request of a CDFA official.

Audit Criteria

- Review of poultry operation's biosecurity plan, policies, and procedures; must submit to auditor at least two days prior to audit
- Visual verification that on-site matches written biosecurity plan including perimeter security, line of separation, and rodent & wildlife control
- Documentation and training compliance, including employee biosecurity training records, cleaning/disinfection logs, and movement tracking (equipment, vehicles)

Audit Failure and Next Steps

- Producer must correct all deficiencies then schedule a re-audit
- An audit must be passed before poultry can be moved onto the premises or no indemnity payments can be collected
- A producer can appeal a failed audit in writing to the auditor within 14 days, then a panel will review for reconsideration
 - Send to either:
APHIS.HPAI.BCAP.audits@usda.gov **or**
Biosecurity Audit Reconsideration
920 Main Campus Dr., Raleigh, NC 27606

We all have a role to play in preventing HPAI and building a more resilient and sustainable agricultural system.

Full details
Indemnity & BCAP

