

Vision

Prevention of need for large-scale regulatory response to an emergence of reportable avian disease, as required for the 2018-2020 virulent Newcastle Disease outbreak, through engaging community members and building effective partnerships between government agencies, academic institutions, avian health experts, bird enthusiasts, and various segments of associated industries; focused towards enhancing avian health, preventing foreign animal disease introduction, supporting immediate disease detection and ensuring rapid containment of disease.

Mission

A community-focused network of partnerships focused on prevention, early detection, and rapid containment of foreign animal diseases (FAD), such as those caused by virulent Newcastle and Avian Influenza viruses, in California domesticated bird populations.

Achievement of the CAHEN vision through:

- **PREVENTION** of outbreaks of FAD in birds through education, training, and outreach to community partners,
- **EARLY DETECTION of FAD** by expansion of existing capabilities through consistent and targeted active and passive surveillance, and
- **RAPID RESPONSE to FAD** outbreaks with specialized strike teams of personnel with established relationships within the community and related stakeholders



CAHEN Goals

- To provide educational materials and outreach activities about avian health topics
- To promote community awareness, participation, and support of FAD control activities.
- To encourage flock owners adoption and implementation of biosecurity measures to prevent introduction and spread of avian diseases,
- To rapidly detect, respond, and eradicate outbreaks of FAD while minimizing impact to communities, the commercial flock industry, international trade, and taxpayers.

Introduction to CAHEN

In 2018, a substantial portion of Southern California's backyard and commercial poultry flocks were significantly impacted by a devastating outbreak of virulent Newcastle Disease (vND) that lasted more than two years. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) worked jointly to identify infections and halt rapid spread of the vND virus before its eradication midyear 2020. As a result of this outbreak and in an effort to prevent more in the future, CDFA established California Avian Health Education Network (CAHEN). This program is dedicated to offering education, training, outreach, testing, and vaccination options for backyard poultry flock owners, other bird enthusiasts, stakeholders,

and everyone dedicated to avian health in Southern California. By working together, CDFA, USDA, University of California extension groups and community partners aim to keep California free of foreign animal diseases to prevent similar devastation in the future.



Programs of CAHEN

Hobby Flock Quality Assurance and Certification Programs:

- Low risk hobby flocks will be certified based on voluntary participation in routine surveillance sampling; education, training and outreach on bird husbandry and health issues; implementation of flock plans including biosecurity training and procedures; and requirements to report disease in the flocks.
- Flocks that do not qualify as low risk will have a similar quality assurance and certification program which will include the elements of the low risk flock program as well as a vaccination program for vND. The vaccination program will include extensive training in vaccination technique and timing, and vaccine handling.

Retail Feed Store and Pet Store Quality Assurance and Certification Program:

- Biosecurity plans, training and audits
- Monitoring of records and sources of poultry which are present in the store for disease traceability
- Regular testing of birds in the stores

Strategies of CAHEN

Education, Training and Outreach (ETO):

- Work with social influencers in the community and on social media
- Educating young people through school and youth activities
- Collaborating agriculture oriented groups such as 4-H, FFA, Grange, fairs, county ag commissioners, and UC cooperative extension
- Various bird fancier groups such as show bird owners and racing pigeon owners
- Working with state and local veterinary medical associations
- Engaging college teachers and students
- Providing outreach and collaboration to local government partners, animal shelters and wildlife refuge and rehab centers
- Online training presentations

Surveillance Testing:

- Passive surveillance includes maintaining the Sick Bird Hotline and CAHFS lab backyard flock necropsy program
- Active surveillance includes targeted testing of hobby flocks, feed store poultry, live bird markets, auctions, swap meets, commercial poultry farms, and smaller independent poultry producers. Testing is also included for import or export/international and interstate movement of poultry.

Rapid Response to FAD (vND and avian influenza) Detection:

- Detect early
- Prevent disease spread so that large area quarantines and response can be avoided

“For more information or to report an unusual number of sick/dead birds, call 866-922-2473”