The California Animal Health and Food Safety (CAHFS) Laboratory System is the backbone of California’s warning system that helps to protect the health of California’s livestock and poultry. CAHFS serves the people of California by safeguarding public health with rapid and reliable diagnoses for animal diseases affecting humans. CAHFS operates in partnership with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), University of California, Davis (UCD), livestock and poultry producers, and California veterinarians.

Veterinarians and owners of backyard poultry are encouraged to submit sick or recently dead birds for necropsy (postmortem) examination.

The CAHFS necropsy service:
- Is available to California backyard flock owners of fewer than 1,000 birds (chickens, turkeys, waterfowl, and squab).
- Provides standard diagnostic work for a submission of one or two birds for a nominal fee of $20. Additional fees apply for pet birds, game birds, or racing pigeons.
- Accepts sick or recently dead bird(s); carcass(es) must be kept cold (in a cooler or equivalent).
- Requires a submission form to be included at the time of submission. Submission form, guidelines, and shipping instructions can be found at: [http://www.cahfs.ucdavis.edu/local_resources/pdfs/submission%20forms/StandardSubmissionForm_11-16_BYF.pdf](http://www.cahfs.ucdavis.edu/local_resources/pdfs/submission%20forms/StandardSubmissionForm_11-16_BYF.pdf)
- Assists with the State’s surveillance program to monitor and detect immediate threats of disease, and
- Obtains information from the diagnostic work that is invaluable for monitoring the spread of disease.

*Note: If delivered by mail, shipping and handling costs are at the owner’s expense.*