



NEWS FROM
ULSTER COUNTY
County Executive Jen Metzger

******For Immediate Release******

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Confirmed ‘Bird Flu’ Affecting Poultry on One Ulster County Farm

NO KNOWN HUMAN CASES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED IN NEW YORK STATE

KINGSTON, NY - The Ulster County Department of Health was notified of a positive case of highly pathogenic avian influenza, also known as H5N1, or “bird flu,” at a farm that housed approximately 50 chickens and ducks. All but two birds on the farm died as a result of the virus. As recommended by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, the remaining two birds were euthanized in order to prevent further spread. Human contact with the birds was limited to the owners and a veterinarian, who will remain under surveillance by an Ulster County Department of Health public health nurse for symptoms over the next 10 days.

An outbreak of avian influenza began in the U.S. in early 2024 and has primarily affected wild birds, farmed birds, and dairy cows. Contact with an infected bird puts individuals at risk of exposure. Workers on dairy and poultry farms and culling operations are at highest risk.

“People working with poultry should consider wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) when working in close proximity to the birds,” **said Ulster County Public Health Director Eve Walter.** “All residents should avoid handling a wild or domestic sick or dead bird. The Ulster County Department of Health communicable disease staff is in direct contact with individuals potentially exposed to this confirmed case of avian influenza. If you or someone you know has questions or is concerned about a potential exposure, please call an Ulster County Department of Health communicable disease nurse at 845-340-3070.”

Individuals who do not come into direct contact with sick animals are considered at low risk for avian influenza. National surveillance of milk is currently in place, and to date, no known human case has been identified in New York State. There are also no known cases involving

domestic pets, but it's advisable to keep pets away from dead birds or animals to the extent possible.

Any birds demonstrating severe illness or die offs in backyard poultry should be reported to the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets Division of Animal Industry at 518-457-3502, or a local veterinarian.

Dead wild birds should be reported to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation at: <https://dec.ny.gov/nature/wildlife-health/reporting-dead-wildlife>.

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