GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

DR. TIM BORING
DIRECTOR

April 24, 2024

Dear Dairy Producer:

As you are no doubt aware, Michigan is at the center of a national outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), with both dairy and poultry farms experiencing infections of a novel variant of the virus first detected in Texas. As has been the case since the first detections in Michigan in 2022, HPAI remains a significant threat to the poultry industry. Several Michigan facilities have already contracted this Texas strain of the virus, experiencing flock depopulation that will have impacts on not just the farms themselves, but also food supply chains and local employment. At the same time, the threat to public health through dairy infections is also a major concern. There is still much we don't know about this virus, including the transmission, incubation period, and long-term effects to cattle. At the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), we are working closely with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), mirroring national collaborations between the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and others. The recent changes in this virus that have resulted in mammalian infections, including dairy and cats, have both animal and public health officials on the highest alert.

The purpose of this letter isn't to share new information, but raise your awareness of the issue, urge you to implement additional biosecurity practices, keep an eye out for MDARD/USDA/industry partner updates, and help us all better understand this virus.

The situation in Michigan and across the country is changing by the day. Impacted dairies, MDARD, USDA through its Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and National Veterinarian Service Laboratory (NVSL), and others are working to understand epidemiology, transmission, and contraction of the virus. As more is learned, working to reduce any possible transmission vectors of the virus, including possible transmission by humans must be a priority. Further, while the risk to public health remains low, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control recommends that people with job-related or recreational exposure to birds or infected mammals, including dairy cattle, should take appropriate precautions to protect against HPAI. Several resources related to biosecurity and job-related appropriate precautions are included today in this packet and more information can be found at: www.michigan.gov/birdflu.

Early identification of the disease, consultation with veterinary experts, and awareness of possible impacted herds is important to limit further spread. HPAI in dairy cattle has been identified with symptoms including decreased lactation, lethargy, abnormal milk, abnormal tacky or loose feces, and dehydration. Recognizing these symptoms and contacting your veterinarian is to provide care and determine next steps is extremely critical to slowing the spread of this disease.

MDARD is committed to taking steps to limit all possible impacts of this disease. It's going to take effort by all of Michigan's agriculture industry to address HPAI. Increasing biosecurity measures, watching for known symptoms of HPAI, and contacting your veterinarian are critical steps you can take now to help slow the spread. MDARD will continue to communicate with farms directly and with industry groups with updates as they become available. Signup for real time updates on our website at: www.michigan.gov/birdflu. Michigan's dairy industry is vitally important to so many of our communities. Public and animal health remain our highest priorities during this outbreak.

Thank you.

Dr. Tim Boring
Director

Attach.

Biosecurity for dairy and beef cattle farms

April 12, 2024 - Michigan State University Extension

Why is Biosecurity Important?

Protecting your herd from disease and illness is always important. Preventive practices and early identification of sick cattle are essential to minimizing the spread of disease amongst individual animals and across herds. If signs of disease are observed in cattle, producers should isolate the animal(s) and immediately communicate with their herd veterinarian.

Farms should develop and implement a biosecurity plan and complete a regular review of their farm's biosecurity practices that focus both on cattle and human health and safety. Proactive implementation of biosecurity measures could reduce the risk of a disease outbreak in your herd, along with its negative economic impact, and protect animal agriculture in the state. Recommended biosecurity practices for cattle farms (dairy and beef) are summarized below.

Human Health and Hygiene

- Wear clean clothes and shoes to the farm.
  - If you have had contact with other livestock, clothing and footwear should be changed before coming to the farm.
- Practice good hygiene, wash hands frequently.
  - Some pathogens are highly sensitive to soap and hot water. Others require strong disinfectants.
- Have dedicated footwear for the farm.
  - All staff should leave boots and footwear used on the farm in a location indicated by the farm for safe storage.
  - All footwear used on the farm must be cleaned and disinfected, including sides and bottoms, prior to storing them.
- Do not eat or drink around animals or in the barn.
- Pasteurized milk and dairy products remain safe, however do not drink raw milk.
- In the case of zoonotic diseases (diseases that can be shared from animals to people), monitor people with access to cattle for potential symptoms of illness.
- People who handle cattle should be aware of clinical signs to help monitor for disease.

Cattle Farm Biosecurity

Introduction of Animals to the Herd

- Prior to transporting cattle to your farm, know the health history of the herds from which cattle are purchased.
  - All cattle shipped across state lines must have official interstate certificate of veterinary inspection (CVI) filled out by a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) accredited veterinarian.
- Before introducing new animals, have a plan to isolate and limit direct contact with the home herd for a minimum of two weeks. Monitor incoming animal(s) health before commingling them with the existing herd.
- Trucks and trailers transporting cattle should be cleaned and disinfected. Implement disinfection protocols on all farm and transport equipment.
- Be conscientious of when you care for newly acquired or sick animals, completing tasks for them after the home herd and healthy animals so as not to spread disease to healthy animals.

Farm Traffic, Visitors & Service Providers

- Have a designated parking location for all visitors and service providers.
- Try to reduce the flow of people between farm sites and the commingling of people from multiple production sites in common places.
  - If employees move between sites, change, or disinfect footwear, (clothing, if possible) and wash hands.
- Control traffic onto and around your farm operation, only vehicles/equipment/people essential to operation should be traveling into animal areas.
  - This includes limiting people's access to cattle pens, feed mixing/storage areas, feed bunks and cattle treatment areas.
- Maintain a visitor log for all farm locations, collect contact information.
  - Employees
  - Visitors
  - Non-farm employed service providers: hoof-trimmers, nutritionists, breeding technicians, veterinarians, etc.
- Ask all visitors and service providers to employ biosecurity practices:
  - Contact visitors before they arrive at the farm. Signage may be helpful.
  - Use disposable footwear, or completely disinfect their footwear.
  - Utilize single use coveralls or clean clothing than be washed after farm visit.
  - Clean and disinfect equipment and tools used on other farms prior to bringing it on the farm.

General Facilities Management

- Keep facilities well maintained and in good repair.

- Maintain up to date, accurate records for animal health (e.g., vaccination, antimicrobial treatment, surgical procedures), feed delivery, and cattle transportation.
  - Use a new needle for each animal when administering injectables.
  - Use a new needle and syringe for each animal when drawing blood.
  - Follow injectable label use information or instructions from your veterinarian.
- Wear the proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when working with or handling cattle.
  - Non-slip steel toed boots
  - Gloves
  - Eye protection
  - Ear protection when using equipment.
- Implement a rodent/pest control program.
  - Minimize the interaction with wild birds by incorporating management practices for wildlife.
  - Secure dumpsters, trash cans, and compost sites.
- Be aware that wet weather conditions and standing water have the potential to increase pathogen transfer.
- If composting, dead animal management should be the last task of the day.
  - If rendering, locate the dead animal pick-up away from all animal spaces and facilities.
- Have separate equipment attachments to handle feed and manure.
- Maintain clean, dry, and well-bedded cattle pens.

Feed Areas and Feed Management

- Keep manure from boots and tires out of feed mixing/storage and feeding areas.
- Maintain clean feed storage/mixing areas and clean up feed spills.
- Maintain adequate body condition by feeding cattle to meet their nutrient requirements.
  - It is illegal to feed ruminant-derived proteins to ruminants (i.e., cattle, sheep, goats).
- Limit-feeding cattle or feeding multiple times per day can teach cattle to clear feeding areas to deter wildlife (e.g., birds, raccoons, rodents) from feeding areas.
- Maintain good fencing for pastures to keep wildlife out.
  - Eliminate fruit trees from animal areas (i.e., pastures) to prevent attracting deer.

Milking Parlor Biosecurity with Dairy Cattle

- Follow recommended milking practices, wear disposable gloves while milking cows.
- Milk and handle suspected or confirmed sick animals last.
  - Switch into a new pair of gloves before milking sick cows to protect yourself from exposure.
- Some diseases require extra precautions. When working with a farm with an active disease outbreak:
  - Identify the contagious pathogen(s) that are on the farm.
  - Wear eye coverings while in the milking parlor to reduce the risk of exposure.

    - If working near the mouth and nose of a cow, wear a mask, preferably N95, to reduce the risk infection.
- Do not eat or drink in the milking parlor or while handling cattle.
- Take extra precautions to clean and disinfect all milking equipment after milking cows suspected or confirmed ill.

Reporting Cattle Disease

- When identified, isolate, segregate and reduce points of direct contact between healthy and sick animals.
- Be in frequent communication with your herd veterinarian regarding sick cattle, they will help you determine if a farm visit and further action is warranted.
- Your herd veterinarian will help determine if sampling and confirmatory testing is necessary.

Safety of Dairy and Beef Products

- Pasteurized milk and dairy products and properly prepared and cooked beef and dairy products remain safe to consume.

Additional Resources

MSU Extension dairy team and beef team educators can help you discuss biosecurity on your farm. Additionally, example biosecurity plans, practices and resources for cattle can be found by visiting the Secure Milk Supply, Secure Beef Supply, or Beef Quality Assurance websites. These resources can help you develop your own farm biosecurity plan and include information on proper cleaning and disinfection processes which have the potential to help stop the spread of zoonotic diseases.

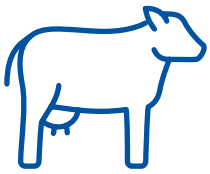
Farm Stress Program Resources

Dealing with animal health issues can be stressful for many people. MSU Extension has partnered with a mental health services provider to provide farmers and farm employees with free teletherapy services that can be used at any time. If you wish to access immediate resources, MSU Extension has compiled a list of resources for you.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

Staff Biosecurity Information and Checklist for Cattle Farms

Biosecurity is our best line of defense. Everyone can help protect Michigan's herds.



As of late March 2024, MDARD engaged in a robust response to address highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in poultry and cattle. At this time, employees are being asked to limit farm-to-farm travel and only complete essential visits. When on cattle farms, staff should utilize the following checklist.

Cattle Biosecurity Checklist

Scan for HPAI Cleaning Tips

BEFORE VISITING A FARM:

- ☐ Avoid contact with poultry and/or cattle of an unknown disease status for 3 days, and poultry and/or cattle of a known infected status for 5 days.
- ☐ Limit farm visits to what is essential to monitor compliance and/or maintain licensure.
- ☐ Don't walk through or drive vehicles in wet areas where waterfowl species may have been.
- ☐ Be sure vehicles, equipment, and tools have been cleaned and sanitized before entering a farm.
- ☐ Use hand sanitizer, personal protective equipment (like washable footwear or shoe covers, gloves, etc.), and coveralls when going on a farm.
- ☐ Keep clean clothing and equipment in a designated "clean" area of your vehicle.

WHILE ON A FARM:

- ☐ Minimize contact time around cattle.
- ☐ Closely adhere to all biosecurity measures already established at a farm by its owners.
- ☐ Staff may use paper documents to minimize trips to the vehicle during a farm visit.
- ☐ Take all necessary supplies with you on your first trip to the work site.
- ☐ Upon arriving at a farm: Pull a safe distance into the driveway, spray tires and undercarriage of vehicle with approved sanitizer (spray full tire, then pull forward and spray missed area).
- ☐ Park in the designated parking area on the farm or in an area in the sun and on a hard surface (like gravel or cement) to mitigate the transmission of potential vectors.
- ☐ Sanitize boots with an approved sanitizer at the proper strength upon entering and/or exiting your vehicle. Ensure proper contact time prior to proceeding to farm. The following sanitizers are effective against viruses like HPAI:
    - o Virkon-S or accelerated hydrogen peroxide (PREempt)
    - o Bleach (such as Clorox) at a rate of 1:32, which is a ½ cup (4 oz.) to one gallon of water
- ☐ Ensure all supplies needed to complete duties are taken on the first trip to the worksite and limit equipment that is taken onto premises to only essentials.
- ☐ Cleanse hands and use washable footwear or shoe covers.
    - o If you handle any birds/livestock, wear coveralls and latex gloves.

LEAVING A FARM:

- ☐ When done on the site, remove and discard protective gear and cleanse hands.
- ☐ Dispose of or place dirty clothing and equipment in a garbage bag and disinfect the outside of it before putting it in the designated "dirty" part of your vehicle.
- ☐ After removing your disposable or washable boots, spray the bottom of your shoes with disinfectant prior to placing your feet in the vehicle.
- ☐ Clean and disinfect vehicles, equipment, and tools after leaving an area/farm. Spray the tires and undercarriage of vehicles where contact with material exposed to the virus is most likely.
- ☐ If you believe you have been exposed to HPAI, immediately contact your supervisor, and monitor your health for 10 days.

Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development

If you notice HPAI risk factors and sick cattle, please notify producers to contact their herd veterinarian.

Updated 4/22/24

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

Staff Biosecurity Information and Checklist for Poultry Farms

Biosecurity is our best line of defense. Everyone can help protect Michigan's flocks.

As of late March 2024, MDARD engaged in a robust response to address highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in poultry and cattle. At this time, employees are being asked to limit farm-to-farm travel and only complete essential visits. When on poultry farms, staff should utilize the following checklist.

Poultry Biosecurity Checklist

Scan for HPAI Cleaning Tips

BEFORE VISITING A FARM:

- ☐ Avoid contact with poultry and/or cattle of an unknown disease status for 3 days, and poultry and/or cattle of a known infected status for 5 days.
- ☐ Limit farm visits to what is essential to monitor compliance and/or maintain licensure.
- ☐ Don't walk through or drive vehicles in wet areas where waterfowl species may have been.
- ☐ Be sure vehicles, equipment, and tools have been cleaned and sanitized before entering a farm.
- ☐ Use hand sanitizer, personal protective equipment (like washable footwear or shoe covers, gloves, etc.), and coveralls when going on a farm.
- ☐ Keep clean clothing and equipment in a designated "clean" area of your vehicle.

WHILE ON A FARM:

- ☐ Park in the designated parking area on the farm or in an area in the sun and on a hard surface (like gravel or cement) to mitigate the transmission of potential vectors.
- ☐ Only bring what is essential. Keep non-essential staff, vehicles, equipment, and tools from entering a farm.
- ☐ Cleanse hands and use washable footwear or shoe covers.
    - o If you handle any birds/livestock, wear coveralls and latex gloves.
- ☐ Sanitize boots with an approved sanitizer at the proper strength upon entering and/or exiting your vehicle. Ensure proper contact time prior to proceeding to farm. The following sanitizers are effective against viruses like HPAI:
    - o Virkon-S or accelerated hydrogen peroxide (PREempt)
    - o Bleach (such as Clorox) at a rate of 1:32, which is a ½ cup (4 oz.) to one gallon of water
- ☐ Notice your surroundings. Look for the presence of wild birds, rodents/insects, open water sources, unsecured feed, or other external HPAI risk factors.
- ☐ Know the signs of HPAI in poultry:
    - o Sudden deaths
    - o Significant drop in water consumption
    - o Lack of energy, appetite, or vocalization
    - o Drop in egg production
    - o Diarrhea
    - o Nasal discharge, sneezing, or coughing

LEAVING A FARM:

- ☐ When done on the site, remove and discard protective gear and cleanse hands.
- ☐ Dispose of or place dirty clothing and equipment in a garbage bag and disinfect the outside of it before putting it in the designated "dirty" part of your vehicle.
- ☐ After removing your disposable or washable boots, spray the bottom of your shoes with disinfectant prior to placing your feet in the vehicle.
- ☐ Clean and disinfect vehicles, equipment, and tools after leaving an area/farm. Spray the tires and undercarriage of vehicles where contact with material exposed to the virus is most likely.
- ☐ If you believe you have been exposed to HPAI, immediately contact your supervisor, and monitor your health for 10 days.

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If you notice HPAI risk factors and sick cattle, please notify producers to contact their herd veterinarian.

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