

External Talking Points – HPAI Cattle and Poultry Response

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High-Level Messaging

- The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) continues to thoroughly and robustly respond to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) detections in both dairy cows and poultry.
 - MDARD is working in collaboration with federal, state, and local partners to quickly and efficiently respond to this disease.
 - This virus does not stop at county or state lines, which is why every Michigander must be aware of this disease and actively take steps to prevent its spread.
 - We must all be on high alert, and this is an all-hands-on deck-approach.
- Following a Federal Order put in place by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Michigan was the first state to go above and beyond these requirements to further protect animal and human health.
- To start, Michigan made HPAI a reportable animal disease for all species in the state requiring MDARD to be notified within 24 hours.
- On Wednesday, May 1, MDARD Director Boring signed a Determination of Extraordinary Emergency, [HPAI Risk Reduction Response Order \(HRRRO\)](#) in response to Michigan's ongoing HPAI outbreak.
- This order took effect on May 8 and implemented the critical steps necessary to further protect Michigan's livestock industry by requiring enhanced biosecurity measures for producers with cattle herds and limiting opportunities for the comingling of animals in situations posing a risk.
- The situation with HPAI in Michigan mirrors what is happening in states across the country.
 - All affected states are in regular communication with each other as well as federal partners to better understand how this virus is transmitted and combat this disease.
- Regardless of the species, biosecurity is the best tool animal owners have to protect against HPAI, which is why MDARD is requiring producers to tighten up all biosecurity measures to reduce the possibility of introducing the virus and causing it to spread.
 - "Biosecurity" means to take steps to reduce the risk of being exposed to and/or spreading disease.
- MDARD urges producers to closely monitor the health of their animals and to contact their veterinarian immediately if they have any animal health-related concerns and/or for help refining their biosecurity plans.
- The department is thankful for the ongoing and continued support from our state and federal partners, like USDA, as we address this outbreak.

Human Health

- On May 22, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) announced the first case of influenza A (H5) virus identified in a Michigan farmworker who had regular exposure to livestock. The risk to the public remains low.
- The individual worked closely with cows at a dairy known to be impacted by Influenza A H5N1. Cows infected with H5N1 still need to be milked for their welfare. The milk from these cows does not enter the food supply.

- The individual got infected material (raw, unpasteurized milk) directly in their eye while milking the animal. The next day, farmworker reported redness and watery discharge in that eye. The individual recovered two days later and has reported no other signs or symptoms of illness.
- On May 30, 2024, DHHS announced a second human case of HPAI in a farm worker.
- This farm worker was quickly provided antivirals and is recovering from respiratory symptoms.
- These cases, and the case in Texas, demonstrates that use of PPE on farms, including proper eye protection, should be considered on all dairy farms - especially farms impacted by HPAI. PPE order forms are available at www.michigan.gov/birdflu.
- Farm workers who have been exposed to impacted animals have been asked to report even mild symptoms. Then, testing for the virus has been provided.
- Michigan is grateful for the cooperation of farm owners and workers for participating in monitoring. MDARD, MDHHS and local health departments continue to work closely farms and workers to conduct monitoring of the health of people exposed to ill animals.
- The virus has been circulating in dairy and poultry farms across the U.S., this spring, and state and local public health officials have been closely monitoring for human cases, which can occur sporadically in individuals with close contact to ill animals. All cases showed mild symptoms and there is no evidence of human-to-human transmission at this time.
- The United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention continue to stress the public health risk associated with this disease remains low, and the U.S. food supply remains safe and stable.

HRRRO-Specific Details

- HRRRO requires that all Michigan dairy farms must develop and implement biosecurity practices which include:
 - Designation of a biosecurity manager.
 - Develop a line of separation to represent the perimeter of a secure area around where animals are housed, limiting access points.
 - Establishment of cleaning and disinfection practices and procedures at those access points for both vehicles and individuals. This must include deliveries of feed and other supplies.
 - Establishment of a logbook maintaining a record of all vehicles and individuals who have gotten out of vehicles and crossed those access points.
- All lactating dairy cattle, and those in the last two months of pregnancy, are prohibited from being exhibited until there are no new cases of HPAI in dairy cattle in Michigan for at least 60 consecutive days. No dairy cattle of any age from an infected premises may be exhibited until further notice.
- All poultry exhibitions or expositions are prohibited until there are no new cases of HPAI in domestic poultry in Michigan for at least 30 consecutive days.
- This order does not extend to permanent poultry exhibits in venues such as zoos or racing pigeons if certain criteria are met.

Dairy

- In 2024, MDARD has confirmed detections of HPAI in dairy cows in 10 counties for a total of 25 herds: Allegan (1), Barry (1), Calhoun (1), Clinton (5), Gratiot (5), Isabella (2), Ingham (1) Ionia (5), Montcalm (2), and Ottawa (2).
- These ongoing detections underscore the importance of adhering to strict biosecurity, limiting or stopping non-essential visitors to the farm including tours and school trips, vigilantly monitoring animal health, work with a veterinarian, and test any suspected cases.
- As cattle producers continue to monitor the health of their animals, please watch for signs such as decreased lactation, low appetite, abnormal milk, and other symptoms.
- If these symptoms are noticed, producers should call their veterinarians immediately, who will then assess the animals to determine the next appropriate steps to take.
- As MDARD urge producers monitor their herds for these signs, the department fully expects this pattern of reporting and testing to continue, leading to the potential for more cases to be identified in the future.
- The more testing that is done, the more we can learn about this virus and better guidance for our farmers can be developed.
- MDARD will continue to share and provide updates with the latest information available online at <http://www.michigan.gov/birdflu>.

Poultry

- In 2024, MDARD has eight confirmed detections of HPAI in four counties: Gratiot, Ionia, Newaygo, and Ottawa. All were in commercial poultry facilities except one detection in an Ionia County backyard flock.
- HPAI has been circulating in Michigan poultry since February 2022.
- The first detection of HPAI in 2024 was confirmed on April 1 in Ionia County.
- With HPAI continuing to be detected in Michigan, it's critical for farmers and backyard poultry owners to take every action possible to protect their flocks.
- Domestic poultry raised outdoors have a much greater risk of being exposed to diseases like avian influenza because they are more likely to interact with wild birds that could carry the disease.
- Poultry owners should watch for multiple sudden deaths in the flock, a drop in egg production, significant decrease in water consumption, diarrhea, sneezing/coughing, or an increase in sick birds within their flocks; and immediately contact MDARD.
- If avian influenza is **suspected in domestic birds**, contact MDARD **immediately** at 800-292-3939 (daytime) or 517-373-0440 (after-hours).
- Anyone can report avian influenza; you do not have to be a veterinarian.