

**PROTECT YOUR BIRDS FROM THE RISK OF
AVIAN INFLUENZA (Bird flu)**

**ADVICE FOR NON-COMMERCIAL KEEPERS OF POULTRY &
WATERFOWL.**

When referring to poultry and waterfowl the bird species are:

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| • Chicken (including bantams) | • Pigeons |
| • Geese | • Ducks |
| • Guinea-Fowl | • Turkeys |
| • Pheasants | • Partridges |
| • Quail | • Peacocks and Swans |

1. Background

Avian Influenza is a highly contagious viral disease which affects the respiratory system, digestive system and nervous system of many species of birds.

2. Symptoms

Swelling of the head, darkening of the wattles and comb, dullness, loss of appetite, breathing difficulties, diarrhoea, drop in egg production, are all symptoms which can cause sudden death or probably multiple deaths without any signs of disease developing. There can be a wide range of variability in symptoms and severity of symptoms. A number of other diseases such as mycoplasma infection could cause similar symptoms. If you are concerned that your birds may be showing these symptoms please contact your

private veterinary surgeon in the first instance. Waterfowl and seabirds may carry the disease without showing any symptoms.

3. Spread of Disease

Direct contact with secretions from infected birds especially via faeces. Contaminated feed, water, equipment, clothing, vehicles, human visitors and vermin can spread the disease. Apparently healthy waterfowl and seabirds may introduce infection. Broken contaminated eggs may infect chicks with which they are in contact.

4. Biosecurity

This involves making sure that good hygiene practices are in place to prevent or minimise the spread of disease. In the current situation where there is no human pandemic, disease spread from wild birds is probably the greatest risk.

Please read the questions below. If the answer to any of the questions is yes consider how you may reduce the risks. Advice on biosecurity can be sought from your private Veterinary Surgeon or the Department of the Environment – Telephone number: 441600

- Is your holding near an area of open water or other area where wild birds especially waterfowl are known to congregate, for example during migration?
- Do your birds have access to outdoor areas?
- Are any such outdoor areas open to wild birds?
- Do you feed and / or water your birds outside?
- Are there other animals on the holding with which your birds have contact?
- Do you share contractors, suppliers or employees with other poultry keepers?
- Do you attend bird fairs or shows?
- Do you keep birds on more than one site?
- Do you move birds on sites shared with other poultry keepers?
- Have you or your family or employees travelled or intend travelling to an area currently experiencing Avian Influenza?

5. Housing

If the risks of Avian Influenza increase you may be required to enclose free range birds. This would mean not just enclosing the birds but also covering the enclosure so that wild birds cannot land on it. This can be achieved by covering the enclosure with netting supported on poles so that it is more difficult for wild birds especially waterfowl to land on it. A 1/2 inch mesh should prevent even small species of birds from gaining access.

If risks of Avian Influenza increase you may also be required to provide disinfectant, foot baths and brushes.

6. Registration

You are required to register as a poultry keeper if you have not already done so with the Department of the Environment.

7. Check list

- Feed and water your birds indoors to avoid contamination by wild birds and other animals.
- Make sure your premises are tidy and clean. Spilled feed, litter and standing water attract wild birds and vermin.
- Keep your birds separate from wild birds, waterfowl, pets and other animals. Control vermin.
- Keep visitors and their vehicles away from your birds as far as possible. If they must have access, make sure vehicles and equipment are clean.
- Make sure your clothes, footwear and hands are clean, before and after contact with birds. Any essential visitors should do the same.
- Avoid sharing equipment, for example this could be crates for transporting birds. If you do have to share, make sure it is cleansed and disinfected before and after use.

- Buy feed from a mill or supplier that operates in accordance with Defra and Agricultural Industries Confederation Codes of Practice. Supply clean, fresh drinking water.
- Be vigilant when purchasing new stock. All birds imported into the Island need a licence. Use reputable sources. Isolate new birds and birds you have taken off your premises (for example, to a show).
- Look out for signs of disease. Increased mortality, falling egg production and respiratory distress may be early signs of a disease problem.
- If you suspect disease, act quickly and consult your vet. Bird flu and Newcastle disease are notifiable diseases and must be reported to the States Veterinary Officer at the Department of the Environment.

8. Contact details

For more information on biosecurity contact John Jackson at the Department of the Environment **OR** visit our Jersey website, go to www.gov.je/Poultry and see our Guidance on biosecurity.

For further information regarding Avian Influenza and human health please contact the office of the Medical Officer of Health.
Telephone Number: 443712

You can find out more about diseases such as Avian Influenza, including what to look out for and clinical signs, on the Defra website www.defra.gov.uk using the quick links.