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Department of Agriculture,  
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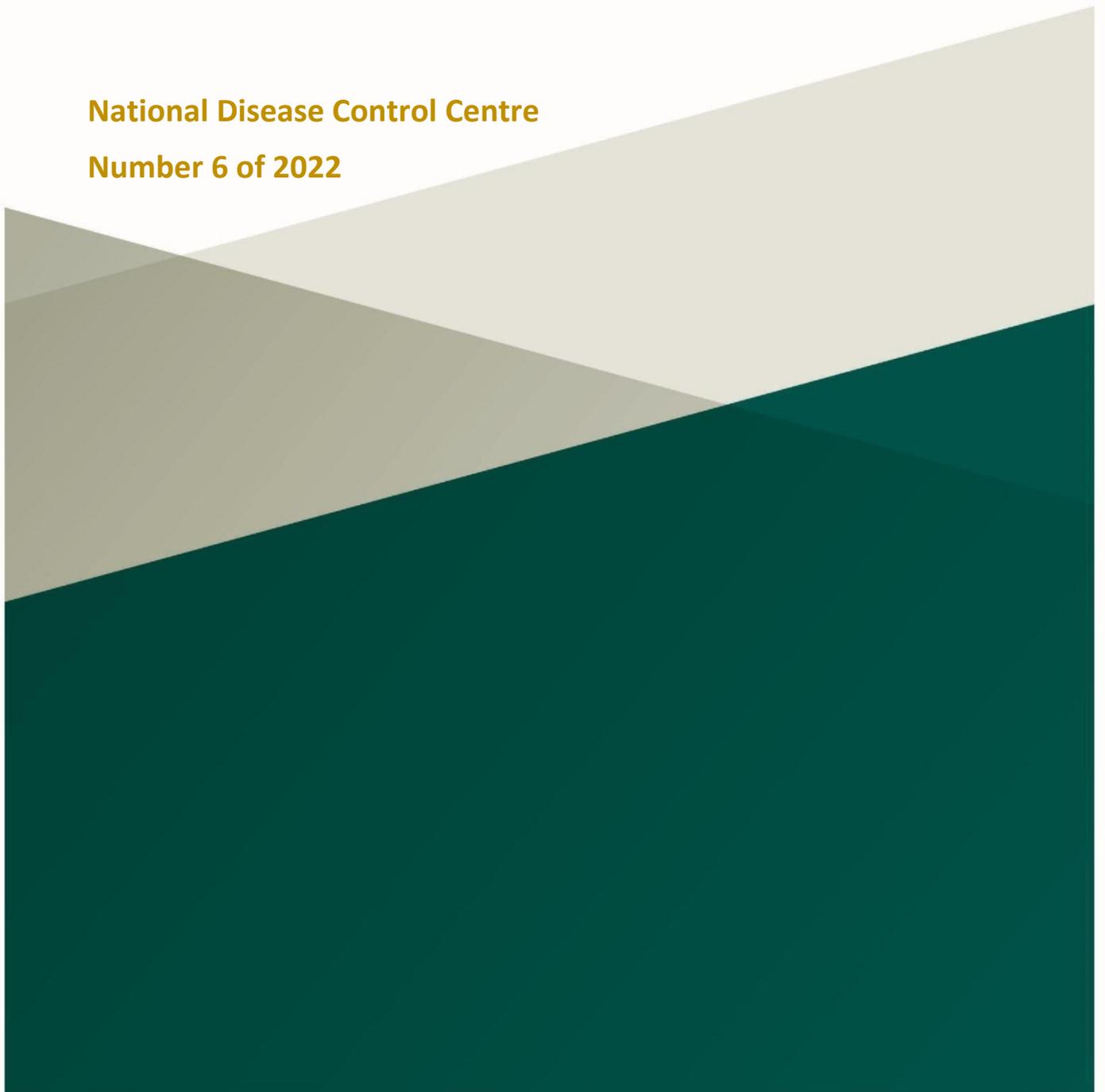
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# Avian Influenza Update

11<sup>th</sup> May 2022

**National Disease Control Centre**

**Number 6 of 2022**



## Restriction on assembly of live birds and enhanced biosecurity regulations introduced last November to be withdrawn on 16 May 2022

- Further to our last update of 26 April 2022 which announced that the Precautionary Confinement of Birds (Housing Order) was to be withdrawn on 29 April, the remaining measures introduced to mitigate the risk of spread of avian influenza are also to be withdrawn
- A ban on bird gatherings, marts and assemblies for the purposes of show or sale is also to be withdrawn (SI No.592 of 2021 – Avian Influenza (Restriction on Assembly of Live Birds) Regulations) on 16 May 2022
- Biosecurity regulations introduced in November to help protect poultry and captive birds from avian influenza (SI No.593 of 2021 - Avian Influenza (Biosecurity Measures) Regulations) are to be withdrawn on 16 May 2022
- Although the enhanced mandatory biosecurity regulations are being withdrawn, high biosecurity standards should remain as best practice and help to protect your flock against all poultry disease, not just Avian Influenza (see Biosecurity Advice below)

### Risk to Ireland regarding HPAI

- Avian Influenza **is highly contagious for birds**. The virus may still be present in the environment and can be transmitted to your flock by wild birds.
- Flock owners should continue to **maintain best practice biosecurity measures** to prevent the introduction of avian influenza into poultry and captive bird flocks. The risk has reduced sufficiently to allow restrictions to be lifted; however, there is **still a risk of incursion**
- The reduction in the risk level is based on a number of parameters which include decreasing wild bird infection pressure, reducing numbers of migratory waterfowl and increasing environmental temperatures and daylight hours
- Flock owners should **remain vigilant for any signs of disease in their flocks**, and report any disease suspicion to their nearest Regional Veterinary Office
- Members of the public are advised **not to handle sick or dead wild birds**. Please **report sick or dead wild birds** to the local Regional Veterinary Office or contact the DAFM disease hotline on 01 492 8026 (outside of office hours)
- Sick or dead wild birds can also be reported to DAFM using the **Avian Check - Wild Bird App** <https://aviancheck.apps.rhos.agriculture.gov.ie>.

## Avian Influenza – Current Situation in Poultry

- There have been no further outbreaks of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N1 in poultry or captive birds since 20 December 2021.
- Ireland's self-declared disease-free status for avian influenza was published by the OIE on 21 January 2022. Maintenance of this status which is important for international movements and trade of poultry and poultry products will remain dependent on the absence of any further outbreaks of avian influenza in poultry in Ireland
- An interactive map (for illustrative purposes) courtesy of the Centre for Veterinary Epidemiology and Risk Analysis (CVERA) displaying the locations of avian influenza cases in wild birds is available at the following link <https://arcg.is/19zHrf0>

## Biosecurity Advice

All poultry owners and keepers should implement high levels of biosecurity on their holdings to help protect their flocks from poultry disease, not just avian influenza. All flock owners should ask themselves the following questions to help ensure you are implementing appropriate measures:

### 1. Who has access to the poultry areas?

Only allow essential persons access to the poultry houses e.g., husbandry, veterinary care. Ensure that dedicated clothing or disposable personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn including disposable gloves and overalls. Clean and disinfect boots before entering and immediately upon exiting each poultry house. Wash hands each time upon leaving a poultry house.

### 2. Have I checked the disinfectant points?

All disinfectant points should be maintained. **Read the label** on the disinfectant which is approved for use against avian influenza. Disinfectant footbaths should be changed regularly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Contamination prevents the effective use of disinfectants. Footwear needs to be cleaned thoroughly before being disinfected in foot dips. **Wait the recommended contact time before entering the house.** Repeat checks with disinfectant points at entry and exit points to the premises

### 3. Can wild birds get access to the poultry?

Inspect the housing thoroughly. Ensure that there are no gaps where wild birds can enter the housing. Check the gutters and roof. Can contaminated rainwater enter the house? Can wild birds get access to or contaminate the drinking water system?

#### **4. Is the feed and bedding stored securely?**

Feed and bedding attract wild birds so secure storage of both is essential. If using straw, ensure it is either double wrapped and covered with a birdproof cover or stored in a shed with no wild bird access. Remove wrapping outside of the house. Feed should be stored in a secure bin and any spills cleaned up immediately. Use wild bird deterrents

#### **5. What do I do about feed delivery/egg collection vehicles that have to come onto the holding?**

It is optimal to disinfect wheels, wheel arches and underbody of all vehicles coming before allowing them to enter the premises and prior to leaving the premises. Do not allow any drivers to enter poultry houses. Ensure that drivers wear disposable gloves and disinfect footwear upon arrival (ensure that there is a disinfectant point near the feed bin/egg storage area)

#### **6. What about equipment?**

Any equipment that is used to transport poultry or poultry products should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected prior to being used on the farm e.g., trolleys, trays, pallets, cages etc. Disposable single-use egg trays or plastic Keyes trays which are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after each use can be used for egg collections. Don't forget about other equipment such as feeders and watering equipment and clean and disinfect equipment and housing between bird placements

#### **7. Be vigilant**

Check the feed and water intake and look for clinical signs of avian influenza. Report any suspicions immediately to DAFM and do not allow anyone on/off the premises pending investigation

These measures are not exhaustive, further biosecurity guidelines available at: [www.gov.ie/birdflu](http://www.gov.ie/birdflu)

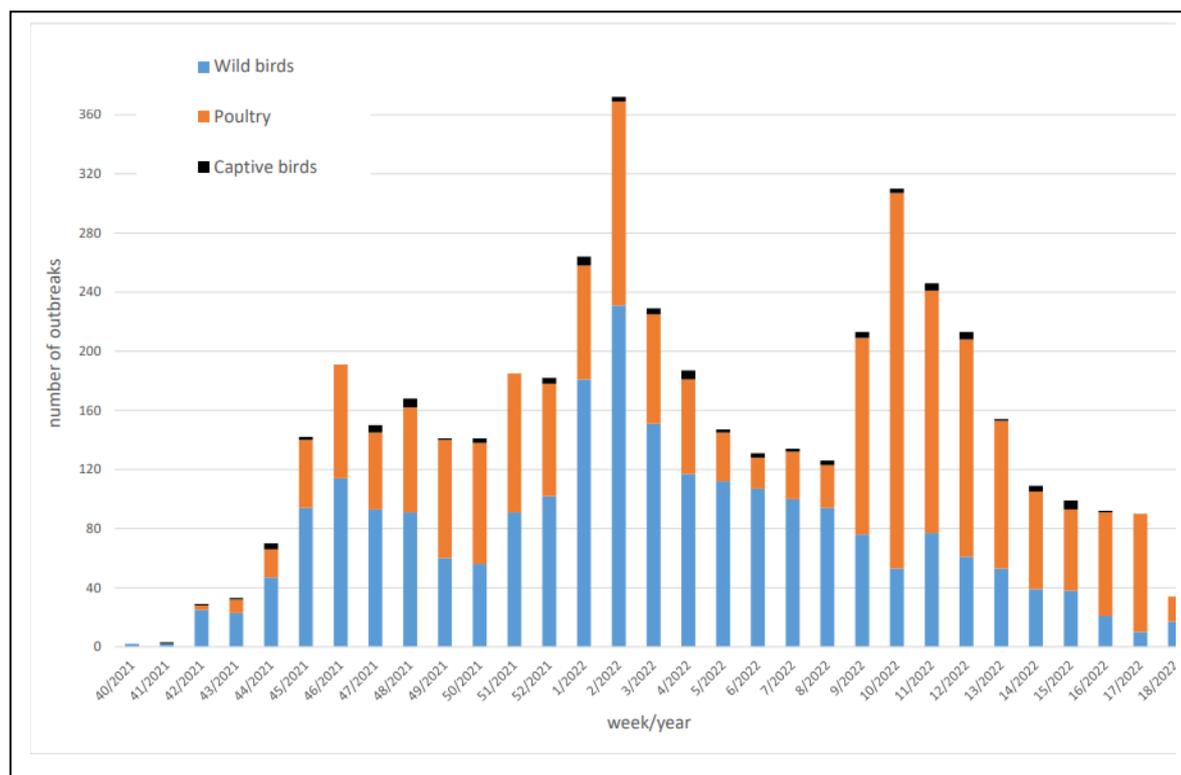
## Current Situation in Northern Ireland

- Northern Ireland has had confirmed six outbreaks of HPAI H5N1 in poultry
- DAERA have produced an interactive map viewer displaying locations of cases of avian influenza in wild birds in Northern Ireland which is available to view [here](#).

## Current Situation in the Rest of Europe

- England has confirmed 96 outbreaks of avian influenza H5N1. Wales and Scotland have reported 5 and 9 outbreaks, respectively
- The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) have developed an interactive map of restriction zones in England, Scotland and Wales, which is available to view [here](#)
- A total of 2,163 outbreaks of HPAI have been confirmed in poultry throughout the EU, the affected EU countries can be found in Table 2
- Over 95% of cases in wild birds have been confirmed to be of subtype H5N1, with small numbers of H5N3 and H5N8 also confirmed.

### Number of confirmed HPAI cases/outbreaks in wild birds, poultry and captive birds in Europe per week (since 4/10/2021)



(Source: [Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie](#))

Figure 2. The number of confirmed cases/ outbreaks of HPAI in wild birds, poultry and captive birds in Europe per week (since 4/10/2021)

COUNTRY	Poultry	Captive birds	Wild birds*	Total
FRANCE	1314	33	44	1391
GERMANY	72	9	1236	1317
NETHERLANDS	46	19	462	527
ITALY	317	1	22	340
HUNGARY	187	2	29	218
DENMARK	8	3	118	129
POLAND	94	0	33	127
BELGIUM	5	3	70	78
SPAIN	31	1	36	68
IRELAND	6	0	46	52
SWEDEN	4	3	39	46
SLOVENIA	1	0	37	38
AUSTRIA	1	3	27	31
CZECH REPUBLIC	19	0	9	28
BULGARIA	24	1	3	28
PORTUGAL	9	5	6	20
ROMANIA	3	0	16	19
NORWAY	2	0	14	16
GREECE	0	0	16	16
FINLAND	0	0	15	15
CROATIA	1	0	13	14
NORTHERN IRELAND	6	0	7	13
ESTONIA	2	0	10	12
SLOVAKIA	3	0	9	12
LITHUANIA	0	0	6	6
ALBANIA	4	0	1	5
LUXEMBOURG	0	0	5	5
ICELAND	1	0	2	3
SWITZERLAND	0	1	2	3
KOSOVO	2	0	0	2
NORTH MACEDONIA	0	0	2	2
UKRAINE	0	2	0	2
LATVIA	0	0	2	2
MOLDOVA	1	0	0	1
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	0	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2163</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>2338</b>	<b>4587</b>

Table 2.

Number of confirmed outbreaks of HPAI in poultry in the EU (01/10/2021 – 09/05/2022)  
 (Source: [Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie](#))

## Current global Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza situation

- The global distribution of avian influenza outbreaks can be viewed in Fig. 3.

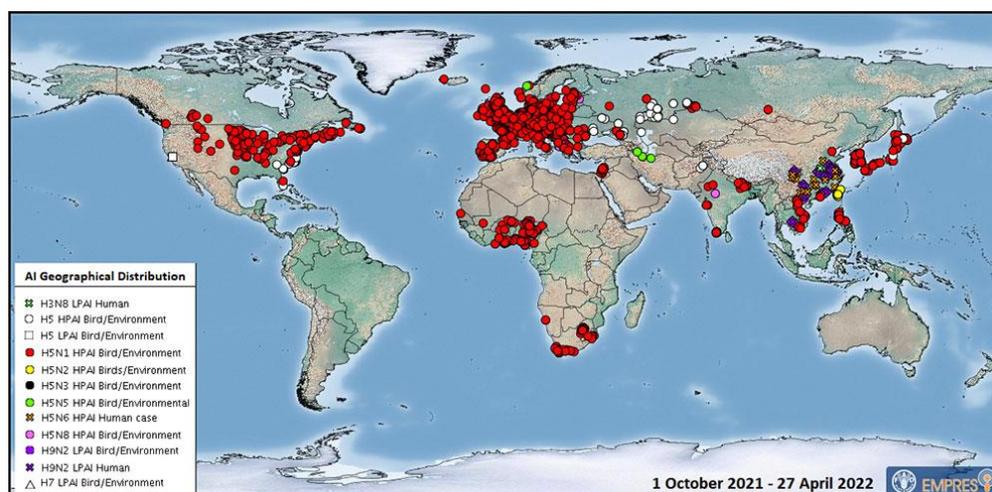


Fig. 3. Global distribution of confirmed avian influenza outbreaks and cases during the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 – 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022 (Source: [FAO](#)).

## Avian Influenza in wild birds in Ireland

- Since 3 November 2021, 80 wild birds in Ireland have tested positive for avian influenza
- Avian influenza has been found in wild birds in the following 16 counties: Cork, Donegal, Dublin, Galway, Kerry, Kildare, Longford, Louth, Leitrim, Monaghan, Offaly, Roscommon, Sligo, Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford.
- The species of wild birds affected include peregrine falcon, white tailed sea eagle, brent goose, barnacle goose, greater white fronted goose, greylag goose, swans (mute & whooper), merlin, watterail, magpie, kestrel, herring gull, corvidae, common buzzard, grey heron, barn owl and cormorant.
- Faeces (droppings) of wild birds infected with avian influenza can contaminate the environment with the infection, which can then spread infection to poultry and captive birds. Colder weather and decreasing daylight levels can extend the survival time of avian influenza viruses in the environment.
- An interactive map (for illustrative purposes) courtesy of the Centre for Veterinary Epidemiology and Risk Analysis (CVERA) displaying the locations of avian influenza cases in wild birds is available at the following link <https://arcg.is/19zHrf0>.

### HPAI +ve Wild Birds

- Barn Owl
- Barnacle Goose
- Brent Goose
- Buzzard
- Corvidae
- Greenland White-Fronted Goose
- Greylag Goose
- Heron
- Herring Gull
- Kestral
- Magpie
- Merlin
- Mute Swan
- Peregrine Falcon
- Swan
- Water Rail
- White Tailed Sea Eagle
- Whooper Swan



Figure 3. Map of Ireland indicating locations involved in confirmed avian influenza subtype H5N1 cases in wild birds from 1<sup>st</sup> October - 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022. (Source: CVERA)

## Wild bird species affected in Europe

Wild bird species confirmed as affected by HPAI in Europe are (listed in order of decreasing prevalence of confirmed cases):

Barnacle Goose, Mute swan, Greylag goose, Anatidae, Common Buzzard, Cygnus, Dalmatian Pelican, Mallard duck, European Herring Gull, Ardeidae, Eurasian Wigeon, Canada goose, Laridae, White Stork, Whooper Swan, Black-headed Gull, Grey Heron, Accipiter, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Greater White-fronted Goose, Western Great Egret, Great Black-backed Gull, Coot, Unspecified wild bird, Kestrel, Peregrine Falcon, Eurasian Magpie, Common Shelduck, Corvidae, Charadriidae, Yellow-legged Gull, Pheasant, Gadwall, Long-Eared Owl, White-tailed eagle, Grey-headed Gull, Common Teal, Great Cormorant, Eurasian curlew, Numenius, Strigiformes, Eurasian Eagle-Owl, European crane, Barn Owl, Rook, Sanderling, Sparrowhawk, Egyptian Goose, Tundra bean goose, Oystercatcher, Brant Goose, Mew Gull, Ciconiidae, Red Knot, Great Blue Heron, Ciconia, Scolopacidae, Muscovy duck, Caspian gull, Great White Pelican, Pink-footed Goose, Red kite, Great crested grebe, Lesser White-fronted Goose, Common woodpigeon, Lesser black backed gull, Rough-legged Hawk, Falco, Spotted Harrier, Collared Dove, X104 Pied Avocet, Pelican, Taiga Bean Goose, Northern Pintail, Larus, Merlin, Black Swan, Ruddy turnstone, Little Owl, Jackdaw, Passeridae, Little grebe, Western Gull, Columbidae, Bonelli's Eagle, Water rail, Ural Owl, Common Eider, Western Sandpiper, Haematopodidae, Ferruginous Duck, Swan goose, Northern Fulmar, Tawny Owl, Eurasian Jay, Common redshank, Green Sandpiper (Source: [Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie](#)).

## Risk to Ireland regarding Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N1

- The disease poses no food safety risk for consumers. Properly cooked poultry and poultry products, including eggs are safe to eat
- From October onwards each year we enter into the higher risk period for Avian Influenza in Ireland. Colder weather and decreasing daylight can extend the survival time of Avian influenza viruses in the environment
- This is due to the fact that migratory wild birds, the natural hosts of many avian influenza viruses, start to arrive in large numbers to overwinter here
- Migratory wild birds are known to carry the H5N1 subtype of Avian influenza, and this can increase the level of risk for a potential outbreak of Avian influenza in Ireland
- HPAI H5N1 is a notifiable disease both in Ireland and to the European Commission and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)
- Outbreaks of HPAI H5N1 in poultry in Ireland impact upon our international trade in poultry and poultry products
- The disease is highly contagious for birds, but risk of transmission to humans is considered very low

## What can poultry owners do to reduce the risk of avian influenza?

- Flock owners should **remain vigilant for any unexplained signs of disease** in their flocks, and report any disease suspicion to their nearest [Regional Veterinary Office](#)

**1. Be vigilant-** Monitor your birds carefully for any clinical signs of disease. If in doubt, contact your veterinary practitioner for advice. Signs of avian influenza include:

- Death/high mortalities in a flock
- Depression/lethargy
- Loss of appetite
- Respiratory distress such as gaping beak, coughing, sneezing, gurgling, rattling
- Swelling and blue discolouration of combs, wattles, neck and throat
- Diarrhoea
- Reduced egg production or no egg production

## 2. Biosecurity

[Advice on biosecurity to prevent Avian Influenza](#) including clinical signs and leaflets can be found at [www.gov.ie/birdflu](http://www.gov.ie/birdflu)

### Personnel and Visitors

- Wear disposable or dedicated outer clothing when in contact with your birds
- Wear boots that can be disinfected, disposable gloves and wash hands after contact with poultry
- Only allow essential personnel access to your birds

### Buildings and Equipment

- Regularly clean and disinfect hard surfaces such as paths and walkways
- Provide clean boot washing and disinfection facilities at all entrances/exits and ensure that people use them
- Clean and disinfect any vehicles or equipment that comes into contact with the birds after use
- Have suitable pest control in place

### Wild Birds

- Feed and water birds inside or at least under cover
- Clean up any waste feed in outdoor areas frequently
- Use netting or wild bird decoys or deterrents to keep wild birds away from poultry areas

### Management

- Keep ducks and geese separate to other poultry species

- The Department also reminds all poultry owners, including those who keep only 1 or 2 birds, of their legal obligation to register their premises with the Department.
- Use an [approved disinfectant](#) against Avian influenza in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions

## DAFM surveillance for avian influenza

- DAFM implements avian influenza surveillance measures which take place right throughout the year in both wild birds and poultry and form part of our well-established Early Warning System for the detection of avian influenza. The submission of dead wild birds which are on the target species list for avian influenza surveillance for testing at the Central Veterinary Research Laboratory forms part of this programme
- Members of the public are advised not to handle sick or dead wild birds. Please report sick or dead wild birds to the local Regional Veterinary Office or contact the DAFM disease hotline on 01 607 2512 (during office hours) or 01 492 8026 (outside office hours)
- **Sick or dead wild birds can also be reported to DAFM using the Avian Check - Wild Bird App** <https://aviancheck.apps.rhos.agriculture.gov.ie/>

## Further information:

DAFM has a wide variety of biosecurity resources for avian influenza- please see:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/7e230-poultry/>

To register a poultry flock:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/984df6-poultry-register/>

RVO contact details:

[Regional Veterinary Office](#)

List of target species of wild birds for avian influenza surveillance:

[List of Target Species for Avian Influenza Surveillance](#)

European Commission

[https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/diseases-and-control-measures/avian-influenza\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/diseases-and-control-measures/avian-influenza_en)

## National Disease Control Centre

**11<sup>th</sup> May 2022**