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## **Avian Influenza Confirmed in Arkansas Commercial Poultry Flock; Producers Urged to Take Precautions**

**LITTLE ROCK, AR** – Testing has confirmed a case of avian influenza on an Arkansas poultry farm in Madison County. Following an investigation by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture’s Livestock and Poultry Division in collaboration with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Veterinary Services, the USDA National Veterinary Services Laboratory has confirmed poultry from this farm have tested positive for highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza (HPAI).

There is no public health concern, and avian influenza does not affect poultry meat or egg products, which remain safe to eat. The Arkansas Department of Agriculture and partner agencies, including the USDA, are working to contain the situation. Actions include sampling and quarantining nearby poultry flocks.

“We have taken immediate action to contain this disease and will continue to work with poultry growers, the industry, and our laboratory partners to protect against its spread,” said Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture Wes Ward. “Arkansas poultry is safe to eat, and consumers can be confident in the safety of their food.”

“The farm is under quarantine to stop the spread of avian influenza to other flocks in the state,” said Arkansas State Veterinarian John Nilz.

Under the provisions of the Poultry Disease and Flock Condemnation Rule, which can be found at [agriculture.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/Poultry-Disease-and-Flock-Condemnation.pdf](https://www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/Poultry-Disease-and-Flock-Condemnation.pdf), it is prohibited to conduct the following actions within an affected area:

- Exhibit poultry and domestic waterfowl.
- Move poultry or domestic waterfowl.
- Sell, barter, trade, auction, or give away poultry or domestic waterfowl at fairs, swap meets, auctions, flea markets, and similar events and locations.

An affected area is an area determined by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture of approximately 25 miles surrounding a flock with a confirmed case of HPAI. The boundaries of the affected area for the confirmed case in Madison County are Gateway (northernmost), Osage (easternmost), Combs (southernmost), and Harmon (westernmost).

Additionally, all free range and backyard poultry within an affected area, whether intended for commercial or noncommercial use, must be confined under cover or inside structures to prevent contamination from migratory birds. Backyard flock owners who have sick or unusual deaths in their flocks should email [info@agriculture.arkansas.gov](mailto:info@agriculture.arkansas.gov) or call (501) 823-1746.

For more information on avian influenza visit [aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/avian-influenza/ai](https://aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/avian-influenza/ai) and for protecting poultry, visit [aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program](https://aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program).

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