



# Our message to our customers

Questions and Answers  
about Avian Influenza

5/21/15

You may have seen recent reports in the news about avian influenza (“bird flu”) affecting poultry and egg farmers in the United States. In order to address our customers’ concerns, we have compiled some helpful information about AI.

If you have other additional questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to contact us at [avianfluinfo@ccfbrands.com](mailto:avianfluinfo@ccfbrands.com).

Early this year, the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) detected the presence of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5 virus in U.S. commercial poultry flocks. Since this time, our supply farms have elevated all biosecurity precautions to prevent the introduction of the virus into their flocks. However, we are dealing with an extremely contagious strain of avian influenza that has been wreaking havoc on poultry farms in the U.S. Midwestern states of Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wisconsin. CDC is monitoring this situation and continues to work with public and animal health partners and farmers to minimize the risk to human health.

**The strains of AI that have been found are not a public health concern and have not affected any humans to date. In fact, the CDC considers the risk to people from these HPAI infections in poultry to be low.**

The poultry and egg industries are working together with state and federal regulatory authorities hand in hand to prevent AI virus from spreading, and to limit the occurrence of this disease. Because this strain of avian influenza can spread quickly, we could experience a limitation in the supply of eggs available to consumers. We are continuously and diligently monitoring our egg suppliers and partners for signs of AI and will take swift action to ensure food safety for our customers. For more information on avian influenza, please review the following Q&A from our partners at the Egg Safety Center and United Egg Producers.



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# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is avian influenza?

Avian influenza (AI), a virus commonly known as the “bird flu,” is an infectious disease of birds caused by type A strains of the influenza virus.

## As a consumer, what should I know about the identification of avian influenza (AI) in the U.S.?

America’s egg farmers understand and share consumers’ concerns about AI. Together with turkey and chicken producers, egg farmers have put comprehensive measures in place to limit the spread of avian influenza.

## Is there AI on egg farms?

Yes, there have been positive findings of AI on commercial egg farms. Egg farmers are working diligently to care for their flocks and prevent the disease from entering their farms.

## Are the current findings of AI a risk to public health?

The identified strains found on commercial egg and turkey farms have not affected any humans and are not considered a risk to public health. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Avian flu viruses do not normally infect humans.” (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/>)

## Can I catch AI from the eggs or meat I eat?

No. Avian influenza can’t be transmitted through safely handled and properly cooked eggs, chicken or turkey. The Food and Drug Administration states, (<http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm085550.htm>), “AI is not transmissible by eating poultry or eggs that have been properly prepared. If HPAI were detected in the United States, the chance of infected poultry or eggs entering the food chain would be extremely low because of the rapid onset of symptoms in poultry as well as the safeguards in place, which include testing of flocks, and Federal inspection programs.”

As a reminder, however, all eggs, chicken and turkey should be cooked thoroughly and at the recommended temperatures to reduce the risk of food-borne illnesses. To learn more about cooking and handling eggs, visit USDA’s food safety question and answer page or the Egg Safety Center.

## How are Egg Farmers Responding?

### What is United Egg Producers (UEP) doing about this situation?

America’s egg farmers continue to be vigilant in keeping their flocks free from disease and assuring the safety of eggs and egg products provided for customers. There is close collaboration between UEP and others in the egg, chicken and turkey farming communities to share information and prevent AI from further spread. In addition, state and federal regulatory authorities are working hand in hand to limit occurrence of this disease and to continue surveillance programs.

### What preventive measures are in place to protect humans from this disease and to prevent the disease from spreading to other flocks?

Egg farmers employ a number of rigorous biosecurity guidelines, including, but not limited to:

- > Restricting on-farm access to essential employees only;
- > Following on-farm disinfecting procedures, such as the use of foot baths;
- > Housing hens indoors to prevent access to wild birds and waterfowl;
- > Limiting movement between farm operations;
- > Requiring protective gear be used at all times for anyone who enters egg farms; and
- > Working closely with animal health experts and veterinarians to monitor flocks.



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