

PROTECT POULTRY – PROTECT PEOPLE

Basic advice for
stopping the spread of avian flu

FAO has prepared these messages for different categories of people – ranging from poultry keepers, veterinarians and culling teams to the general public. They are not intended as rules that must be followed but as advice and, where necessary, they should be adapted to fit local situations.

Breaking down the barriers of ignorance and fear is a key objective in the fight against avian influenza – what people do not know or think might happen can block the chance of success.

We hope these messages can help overcome the obstacles by setting out some of the correct practices to avoid the spread of the disease among animals and thus reduce the risk of spread to humans.

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REDUCING THE RISK OF ANIMAL-TO-ANIMAL INFECTION

FOR THOSE WHO KEEP POULTRY

GOOD HYGIENE PRACTICES HELP PROTECT YOUR FLOCK AGAINST AVIAN FLU

Avian flu can enter your farm when you introduce new poultry.

Avian flu can enter your farm through infected droppings brought in from the outside by shoes, dirty cages and wheels (of bicycles, cars, etc.).

Avian flu can be transmitted between different species (e.g. from poultry to pigs, cats, dogs) - ducks can become infected with avian flu without showing any symptoms, and then transmit it to chickens.

Avian flu can flourish and spread in live bird markets.

Poultry which are sick or have died as a result of avian flu can be very dangerous for your family and community.

If your farm becomes infected, what YOU do next can help control the outbreak, protect people and allow normal production to resume on all farms in the area, especially your own.

You must increase all preventive measures if there is an outbreak of avian flu or farms with sick/dead poultry in the neighbourhood.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR THE SIGNS OF AVIAN INFLUENZA IN YOUR POULTRY

If your poultry shows the following signs, it may have avian influenza:

- ☐ lack of coordination (including inability to walk and stand)
- ☐ ruffled feathers
- ☐ difficulty in breathing
- ☐ loss of appetite
- ☐ depression and droopiness
- ☐ bluish colouring of wattles and comb
- ☐ edema and swelling of head, eyelids, comb, wattles, hocks
- ☐ watery diarrhoea
- ☐ small haemorrhages (most visible on feet and shanks)
- ☐ signs of blood in nose discharge
- ☐ sudden fall in egg production
- ☐ eggs with soft shells

PROTECT POULTRY – PROTECT PEOPLE

Basic advice for stopping the spread of avian flu

PROTECT YOUR POULTRY

- When you buy new poultry, keep them separate from your existing flock for at least 2 weeks
- Keep chickens separated from domestic ducks and geese, and wild birds
- Keep poultry separated from other livestock species
- Protect your supplies of water and feed – they attract wild birds
- Keep birds that appear to be/are sick separate from the rest of the flock and other animals
- Regularly clean the areas where poultry are kept
- Keep your poultry away from water which may contain (wild) bird droppings
- If you return from the market with unsold poultry, keep them separated from other animals, especially younger poultry
- If possible, vaccinate your flock against other diseases (such as Newcastle disease, etc.)

KEEP YOUR FARM ISOLATED

- *Do not borrow equipment or vehicles from other farms*
- Keep the number of visitors to your farm down to a minimum
- Keep all means of transport outside your farm as far as possible
- If transport must enter, wash the wheels at the farm entrance
- When anybody (including you and your family) enters the farm, wash the bottoms of shoes or change shoes at farm entrance
- Wash pens and cages coming from outside
- When you come back from the market, wash the poultry pens, cages and other forms of container and means of transport thoroughly
- Keep pens, cages, other forms of container, the farmyard and equipment clean, washing thoroughly at least once a week

WHAT TO DO WITH SICK OR DEAD BIRDS

- Report sick or dead birds immediately to the veterinary authorities (or local equivalent)
- *Do not leave dead animals lying around*
- *Do not throw dead animals into rivers, lakes or other bodies of water*
- If you have a **plastic bag**, place the carcass in the bag; if you do not, take the carcass away from the rest of the flock and out of reach of children and others
- Leave disposal of bird carcasses to the veterinary authorities (or local equivalent) and help only if they ask
- If there are no veterinary authorities (or local equivalent), seek help from your local community to dispose of carcasses
- *Do not eat the carcass of a dead bird*
- *Do not sell the carcass of a dead bird*

IF YOU MUST DISPOSE OF DEAD BIRDS YOURSELF

- Get rid of carcasses safely by burning them or burying them deeply enough that dogs, cats and other scavengers cannot reach them
- Burn or bury feathers and other waste away from your farmyard

USING MANURE

- Allow manure to decompose for several weeks before applying it on fields

DURING OUTBREAKS

- *Do not visit other farms*
- *Do not bring new animals to your farm*
- *Avoid visitors on your farm*

FOR THOSE WHO SELL POULTRY

Commercial movement of infected poultry or poultry products is one of the main ways of spreading avian flu.

Traders who respect bans on the movement of poultry and poultry products help prevent the spread of avian flu and protect their own economic activity.

You can spread avian flu in your area by visiting an infected farm and then passing on the disease to others through infected droppings on shoes, dirty cages and wheels (of bicycles, cars, etc.).

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- *Do not leave dead animals lying around*
- *Do not throw dead animals into rivers, lakes or other bodies of water*
- If you have a plastic bag, place the carcass in the bag; if you do not, take the carcass away from the rest of the flock and out of reach of children and others
- Leave disposal of bird carcasses to the veterinary authorities (or local equivalent) and help only if they ask
- If there are no veterinary authorities (or local equivalent), seek help from your local community to dispose of carcasses
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ONLY SELL HEALTHY BIRDS

- *Do not trade birds of unknown origin (only trade birds that are certificated/ from a trusted source)*
- *Do not trade poultry that look sick*
- If you notice poultry on a farm that seem to be affected with avian flu, report it to the veterinarian authorities (or local equivalent)
- Try to adopt all in/all out management: sell all animals at the same time and buy animals in one single batch

AVOID TRANSPORTATION IN AFFECTED AREAS

- Respect poultry movement bans: this will help control the disease and lead to lifting of the ban
- Collaborate with the veterinarian authorities: this will help resumption of the poultry trade

DO BUSINESS AT THE FARM ENTRANCE

- *Do not enter a farm with any means of transport: leave it at the entrance to the farm*
- Take your shoes off at the entrance to the farm and ask the farmer to provide you with other shoes. If this is not possible, ask the farmer to help you clean the soles of your shoes

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- Clean the wheels of your means of transport every day
- Clean the cages used for transporting poultry every day

FOR THOSE WHO PROVIDE ANIMAL HEALTH SERVICES

Remember that when you deal with sick birds you risk carrying the virus on your clothes/shoes or becoming infected yourself.

DO NOT CARRY THE DISEASE FROM FARM TO FARM

- Leave your means of transport at the entrance to the farm
- Use protective clothing for culling operations
- Use protective clothing for vaccination of poultry
- Destroy dead/culled birds by burning or deep burying
- After each visit to a farm, dispose of your apron, and clean and disinfect your equipment and boots

REDUCING THE RISK OF ANIMAL-TO-HUMAN INFECTION

FOR EVERYONE

The avian flu virus can be transmitted through contact with poultry, and their droppings, feathers, intestines and blood.

It is very important to minimize contact with poultry and wild birds.

The greatest risk of infection is through the handling and slaughtering of live infected poultry.

Children are particularly vulnerable – keep them away from poultry and do not allow them to pick up feathers or eggs.

REPORT SICK OR DEAD BIRDS

- Report sick or dead animals to the relevant authorities (or local equivalent)

AVOID CONTACT WITH SICK OR DEAD BIRDS

- *Do not eat sick or dead poultry*
- *Do not touch sick or dead birds unless wearing gloves*
- *Do not let children touch or play with sick or dead birds, or touch/pick up bird feathers*
- *Do not sell birds from flocks that have come from an affected area*
- *Do not move sick or dead birds out of an infected area*
- *Do not drink unboiled/untreated water from ponds/wells where birds (poultry or wild birds) may have left droppings*
- *Do not swim in water (such as lakes, rivers) used by wild birds*

ENSURE HIGH HYGIENIC STANDARDS (AT HOME AND IN PUBLIC)

- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
- Learn the signs of avian flu in humans: very difficult breathing, fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, eye infections
- If you suspect that someone has avian flu, try to take care of him/her but keep physical contact to a minimum
- *Try not to sleep in the same room as a person you think may have avian flu*
- If you suspect that someone has avian flu, call for a doctor, or take her/him to a doctor
- If you have any sign of avian flu, stay at home if possible and get someone to call a doctor
- If you come into contact with poultry in an infected area, wash your hands well
- If the authorities proclaim a state of alert, follow all official warnings and indications – as a precautionary measure, avoid crowded places and unnecessary human contact such as shaking hands

FOR THOSE WHO KEEP POULTRY

The avian flu virus can be transmitted through contact with poultry, and their droppings, feathers, intestines and blood.

It is very important to minimize contact with poultry and wild birds.

The greatest risk of infection is through the handling and slaughtering of live infected poultry.

AVOID CONTINUOUS CLOSE CONTACT WITH POULTRY

- *Do not keep poultry in your house*

TAKE SPECIAL CARE OF CHILDREN AND PREGNANT WOMEN

- *Do not let children play with or near poultry – do not allow them to touch/pick up feathers*
- *Keep children and pregnant women away from poultry/birds and do not let them collect eggs*

REPORT SICK OR DEAD BIRDS

- Report sudden death among your poultry immediately to the relevant authorities
- Report sick cases among your poultry to the relevant authorities
- Report other dead animals on your farm to the relevant authorities
- If your poultry die, place them in a plastic bag or other receptacle and inform the relevant authorities

BE CAREFUL WHEN HANDLING SICK OR DEAD BIRDS

- *Avoid touching sick or dead animals with bare hands*
- After placing dead animals in a plastic bag or other receptacle, wash your hands
- Regularly clean the areas where poultry are kept

WHAT TO DO WITH SICK OR DEAD BIRDS

- Report sick or dead birds immediately to the veterinary authorities (or local equivalent)
- *Do not leave dead animals lying around*
- *Do not throw dead animals into rivers, lakes or other bodies of water such as ponds/wells*
- If you have a plastic bag, place the carcass in the bag; if you do not, take the carcass away from the rest of the flock and out of reach of children and others
- Leave disposal of bird carcasses to the veterinary authorities (or local equivalent) and help only if they ask
- If there are no veterinary authorities (or local equivalent), seek help from your local community to dispose of carcasses
- *Do not eat the carcass of a dead bird*
- *Do not sell the carcass of a dead bird*

IF YOU MUST DISPOSE OF DEAD BIRDS YOURSELF

- Get rid of carcasses safely by burning them or burying them deeply enough that dogs, cats and other scavengers cannot reach them
- Burn or bury feathers and other waste away from your farmyard

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ENSURE HIGH HYGIENIC STANDARDS (AT HOME AND IN PUBLIC)

- After working with, touching or taking care of poultry, wash your hands thoroughly
- Clean small farm equipment daily
- Keep to a minimum the number of family members working with poultry
- When working on the farm or sweeping the yard, cover your nose and mouth with a clean cloth/face mask
- After work, remove shoes outside the house and clean them thoroughly after removing any mud or dust

TAKE CARE WHEN SLAUGHTERING POULTRY/GAME BIRDS

Avoid home slaughtering but if you must:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a clean cloth/face mask
- Be very careful and keep contact with feathers, blood, intestines, etc. to a minimum
- Wash your hands thoroughly after slaughtering
- Clean the slaughtering place thoroughly

USING MANURE

- Allow manure to decompose for several weeks before applying it on fields

FOR CULLERS

Culling is a very dangerous activity due to the high risk of becoming infected with avian flu.

The avian flu virus can be transmitted through contact with poultry, and their droppings, feathers, intestines and blood.

It is very important to minimize contact with poultry and wild birds.

TAKE CARE WHEN CULLING POULTRY

- Cover your nose and mouth with a clean cloth/face mask (PPE if available)
- Use gloves
- Be very careful and keep contact with feathers, blood, intestines, etc. to a minimum
- Wash your hands thoroughly after culling
- Clean the culling place thoroughly
- Dispose of any leftovers with care by burning or deep burying
- *Do not allow dogs or other animals to come into close contact with leftovers*

FOR HUNTERS

Wild birds can carry the avian flu virus without showing any symptoms and before an epidemic is detected in the area.

If the virus is in an area, it is possible that all surrounding wild birds carry the virus.

The avian flu virus can be transmitted through contact with wild birds, and their droppings, feathers, intestines and blood.

Hunting dogs retrieve game in their mouths and are therefore very exposed to the virus carried by infected game birds.

Avoid or minimise the use of hunting dogs if the avian flu virus is in the area.

TAKE CARE WHEN SLAUGHTERING WILD BIRDS

- Cover your nose and mouth with a clean cloth/face mask
- Be very careful and keep contact with feathers, blood, intestines, etc. to a minimum
- Wash your hands thoroughly after slaughtering
- Clean all tools and the slaughtering place thoroughly

AVOID CONTACT BETWEEN WILD BIRDS AND POULTRY

- *Do not mix hunted birds with domestic poultry at home*

FOR KEEPERS OF SPORTING BIRDS

Birds are kept for sporting purposes in many countries – cock-fighting, falconry, pigeon racing, etc.

The avian flu virus can be transmitted through contact with poultry and other birds, and their droppings, feathers, intestines and blood.

It is very important to minimize contact with poultry and other birds used for sporting purposes.

RESPECT HYGIENE AND SAFETY

- Wash your hands thoroughly after handling birds
- Cover your nose and mouth with a clean cloth/face mask when cleaning areas where birds are kept
- *Do not let children handle your birds*

TAKE CARE WHEN CLEANING FIGHTING COCKS

- Cleaning a cock after a fight is very dangerous - minimize your contact with the cock's blood and secretions
- *After a fight, never clean the beak of the cock by sucking*
- Cover your nose and mouth with a clean cloth/face mask when cleaning areas where birds have been fighting