



Report avian influenza

Avian influenza – also known as bird flu – is a contagious viral disease that can affect both domestic and wild birds. High pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) causes severe clinical signs and high mortality rates in birds.

New Zealand has never had a case of HPAI. If HPAI arrived here, it could severely impact a variety of bird species, including our native birds.

Clinical signs

The most obvious sign of HPAI is rapid mortality among a group of birds. Other signs vary, depending on the affected bird species:

In wild birds:

- lethargy or a reluctance to move, droopy head, inability to fly or lack of co-ordination
- coughing, panting, and nasal secretions
- severe diarrhoea.

In poultry:

- unusual or unexpected drop in egg production
- reduced appetite
- darkened and/or swollen comb/wattle
- lethargy
- severe diarrhoea.

Protect yourself and prevent spread – do not touch birds with suspected HPAI



Practice good biosecurity

To help prevent the spread of disease, always practice good biosecurity and hygiene when dealing with birds in your everyday work.

- Keep sick and healthy birds separate.
- Wear disposable gloves and wash your hands after handling wild birds or poultry.
- Clean footwear and change clothes after contact with wild birds or poultry.



Report it

If three or more birds in a group are sick or dead, report it immediately to the Exotic Pest and Disease Hotline: 0800 80 99 66.

This is operated 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Your call will be answered by our experienced call centre staff, who will take some details from you. One of our specialist biosecurity investigators will then assess the information and contact you.

Ensure you wait for instructions from one of our investigators before handling any sick or dead birds.

For backyard poultry that are unwell or dying, you should first contact your veterinarian to rule out more common diseases.

Provide as much detail to Biosecurity New Zealand as you can, including:

- a GPS reading or other precise location information
- photographs and/or videos of sick and dead birds
- species identity and estimate of numbers affected (note how many birds are sick or freshly dead)
- an estimate of the total number of live birds present.

Read more here: www.mpi.govt.nz/HPAI

Report suspected HPAI

0800 80 99 66



Photo: DOC, photographer Rod Morris