



State of Utah

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October 23, 2024

UDAF Enacts Mandatory Surveillance of HPAI in Cache County Dairies

Taylorsville, UT — Officials with the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) have enacted mandatory surveillance for highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in all dairies in Cache County. UDAF inspectors will collect bulk tank samples weekly from all Cache County dairy facilities; at this time Federal funding is available to cover the cost of this testing and there will be no additional cost to producers. In the event of a positive test, the dairy will be placed under a quarantine and no movement of lactating cattle will be permitted on or off the facility with the exception of cows going direct to slaughter.

HPAI is a disease that is highly contagious and often fatal in poultry and can be caused by highly pathogenic avian influenza A (H5) and A (H7) viruses. HPAI is often transmitted by wild birds to domestic poultry. In March 2024, HPAI H5N1 was first detected in dairy cattle in Texas and has spread to 14 other states including Idaho, Wyoming, and Colorado. Genetic sequencing has confirmed that the HPAI H5N1 virus recently detected in a Cache County commercial poultry facility is the same one that has impacted dairy cattle in other states. Currently, there have been no confirmed cases of HPAI in Utah dairies.

UDAF is working closely with dairy producers in the area, as well as the Utah Department of Health and Human Services and other local, state, and federal partners, on avian influenza response plans, surveillance, and biosecurity protocols. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, recent HPAI detections do not present an immediate public health concern. At present, no major impacts to the food supply chain are anticipated. As a reminder, the pasteurization of dairy products and proper handling and cooking of poultry and eggs to an internal temperature of 165°F is recommended as a general food safety measure.

Though the risk of HPAI to the general public is low, mild illnesses have only been reported among exposed livestock workers in other states. At present, there have been no confirmed cases of HPAI in humans in Utah. People who have prolonged, regular exposure to poultry or dairy cattle and exhibit symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing, eye irritation, headaches, runny nose, body aches, diarrhea, or vomiting should contact their local health department. For more information on avian influenza in humans visit

<https://epi.utah.gov/bird-flu-in-humans/>.

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Poultry and dairy cattle owners should maintain strong biosecurity plans and vigilantly watch flocks and herds for symptoms of HPAI. Poultry symptoms include high death loss among flocks, nasal discharge, decreased appetite or water consumption, and lack of coordination in birds. Dairy cattle symptoms include decreased milk production; thicker, colostrum-like milk; decrease in feed consumption; dehydration; and fever. Most dairy cattle recover within a few weeks.

Producers should report any signs of illness in poultry or dairy cattle immediately to the State Veterinarian's Office at statevet@utah.gov. UDAF will continue to contact affected producers directly and will post updates to <https://ag.utah.gov/dairy-cattle-and-avian-influenza/>. For producers outside of Cache County interested in participating in voluntary surveillance, email statevet@utah.gov. Financial resources are available for dairy producers through USDA APHIS for costs associated with HPAI testing, veterinary expenses, personal protective equipment, milk disposal, and milk losses.

Resources:

- Financial resources for dairy producers:
<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-detections/livestock/financial-assistance>
- Information about biosecurity, including videos, checklists, and a toolkit are available at:
<https://ag.utah.gov/hpai/> or
<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/defend-the-flock>.
- Nationwide updates on HPAI in livestock can be found at
<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-detections/livestock>.