



## Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Confirmed in Washburn County

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** January 4, 2024

**Contact:** Neal Patten, Public Information Officer, (608) 440-0294  
[neal.patten@wisconsin.gov](mailto:neal.patten@wisconsin.gov)

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has identified a case of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in a commercial flock in Washburn County.

DATCP and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) are working closely with animal health officials on a joint incident response. The affected premises will not move poultry products, and birds on the property will be depopulated to prevent the spread of the disease. Birds from the flock will not enter the food system.

DATCP continues to urge all poultry owners to [implement strong biosecurity measures](#) to protect their birds from the disease. This includes washing hands, disinfecting equipment, restricting access to birds, and separating new birds from existing flocks for at least 30 days. Poultry owners are asked, when possible, to keep their birds indoors.

HPAI viruses are highly contagious and often fatal to domestic poultry. The disease can be spread by contact with infected birds, commingling with wild birds or their droppings, equipment, or clothing worn by anyone working with the animals. Signs of HPAI include:

- Sudden death without clinical signs
- Lack of energy or appetite
- Decrease in egg production; soft, misshapen eggs
- Purple discoloration of wattles, comb, and legs
- Difficulty breathing
- Runny nose, coughing, sneezing
- Stumbling or falling down
- Diarrhea

When HPAI is diagnosed in a Wisconsin flock, a [control area](#) is established within a 10 kilometer area around the infected premises, restricting movement on or off any premises with poultry. To help producers determine if their poultry are located within an active control area or surveillance zone, poultry owners are encouraged to use DATCP's [mapping tool](#).

DATCP reminds Wisconsin poultry owners to [register their premises](#). State law requires that all livestock owners register where their animals are kept. Registration helps animal health officials communicate with flock owners during disease outbreaks.

To report increased mortality or signs of illness among domestic birds, contact DATCP at (608) 224-4872 (business hours) or (800) 943-0003 (after hours and weekends). For updates on how the virus is affecting domestic birds in Wisconsin, and to find resources on protecting Wisconsin poultry, visit [DATCP's HPAI webpage](#).

###

Find more DATCP news in our [newsroom](#), on [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [Instagram](#).