

## Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Ontario Update

April 1, 2024

On behalf of the Feather Board Command Centre (FBCC), the following provides important updates regarding the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) situation in Ontario.

### THE CURRENT SITUATION

On January 31, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) confirmed the presence of HPAI on an Ontario premise. The Primary Control Zone (PCZ) surrounding this premise was officially revoked by CFIA on March 27, 2024.

Currently there are 14 active HPAI cases in Canadian provinces, affecting over 11 million birds. Details on additional premises in other provinces can be found [here](#). HPAI has also been detected in 7 poultry flocks in the United States of America in the last 30 days. Details can be found [here](#).

While we may not currently have any active cases in Ontario, farmers are encouraged to continue to follow heightened biosecurity measures (found [here](#)).

With the spring planting season around the corner, it is extremely important for everyone involved in Ontario agriculture to minimize the risk of introducing fecal material from wild birds into poultry operations. The Avian Influenza (AI) virus can survive for extended periods of time in the environment, particularly in cooler weather. It is important to realize that tilling and planting equipment will cover every inch of fields that may have been contaminated by wild birds. Water, wet soil and feces can become contaminated with AI and linger after the migrating flock has moved on. Soil and wild bird feces can stick to tires and undercarriages of vehicles, including field equipment and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), and be easily spread to other locations.

Follow these guidelines to help mitigate the risk of spreading the virus:

- Wash vehicles between farms, paying close attention to the vehicle tires and wheel wells.
- For footwear, remove obvious mud and organic matter first and then scrub boots especially the bottom tread with a brush and hose. Ensure adequate contact time and concentrations for commercial disinfectants – be sure to read and follow the label!
- Clean all equipment used on farm that could become contaminated.



- Planting and tilling equipment should be kept away from poultry barns and from driveways servicing poultry premises. Avoid contaminating ground areas near poultry barns.
- Avoid driving near barns that contain live birds, if possible. If not, drive slowly to minimize dust.
- Avoid parking by exhaust fans and air inlets unless required as part of loading or unloading.
- Keep records identifying who has been on-farm and where/when equipment and vehicles have travelled.
- After using equipment, shower and change clothing and boots before entering a poultry barn.
- If possible, close curtains on the side of the barn that faces a field where tilling is occurring, particularly in dry and/or windy conditions, to reduce the risk of viral particles blowing into the barn.

**Reminder, if your birds show any signs of illness, call your veterinarian immediately and notify your board.**

## STAY INFORMED

FBCC is committed to providing timely communications to Ontario's poultry industry and will continue to keep you updated as the situation evolves. FBCC staff are collaborating with CFIA and OMAFRA in responding to the situation and working to support business continuity for the poultry industry. If you haven't already done so, please visit the [FBCC website](#) and sign up for Disease Alerts.

