



## REPORT ON AVIAN INFLUENZA ON EGG FARMS – JULY 20, 2015

*For egg customers, elected officials, community leaders and others interested in impacts of Avian Influenza (AI) in the egg layer industry.*

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### RECENT UPDATES

- The U.S. egg community has experienced the worst crisis in its history – the devastating and rapid spread of highly pathogenic (HP) Avian Influenza (AI). A few outbreaks occurred in the west this past winter in wild, backyard and commercial poultry. In late winter and spring 2015, AI was detected in 10 Midwestern states and Ontario, Canada.
- As of July 20, more than 48 million total birds (48,091,293) have been affected in 223 AI-positive flocks.\*
- Of commercial egg farms, 26 farms have tested positive for AI in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wisconsin, totaling more than 35 million laying hens and six million pullets (young birds not yet in production). **This calculates to about 12 percent of all layer hens in the U.S. and more than 30 percent of the layers dedicated for the egg products business.**
- While there have been no new detections since early June, our vigilance cannot and will not stop. The egg community and animal health officials are working to limit further spread in the fall migratory season.

### INDUSTRY RESPONSE

- The egg industry continues to collaborate with state and federal officials on AI response issues, including euthanasia of flocks, management of mortality on farms, vigilance in biosecurity measures, indemnity provisions that ensure affected farms can recover, repopulation of affected farms and vaccine research.
- It is believed that AI is transmitted through wild birds and waterfowl, either through direct contact with other birds or indirectly if the disease is carried onto a farm by humans, vehicles or other means. Animal health experts continue to evaluate other ways the disease spread.
- U.S. egg farmers have implemented extensive biosecurity measures and taken every precaution to protect their flocks, including restricting farm access, preventing hens from exposure to wild and migratory birds, increasing veterinary monitoring of flocks and using protective gear at all times.

### KEY POINTS FOR THE PUBLIC TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT AVIAN INFLUENZA

- Maintaining the health and well-being of hens and producing safe, healthy eggs is of utmost importance to U.S. egg farmers.
- Egg farmers are deeply concerned about AI, which has taken a terrible financial and emotional toll on the farm community. Disease prevention is a top priority.
- The strains of AI that have been found in the U.S. are not a public health concern and have not affected any humans to date, as confirmed by CDC.
- Avian influenza cannot be transmitted through safely handled and properly cooked eggs. [Egg Safety Center](#) has a complete Q&A on safe handling and preparation.
- The US egg industry is collaborating with federal and state officials and scientific experts, in AI surveillance and response, as well as identifying workable, long-term biosecurity and disease prevention measures to limit the spread of AI now and in the future.

*As a farmer cooperative, United Egg Producers (UEP) is the voice of egg farmers who independently produce more than 90 percent of all eggs in the U.S.*

*\* [USDA APHIS website](#) (U.S. Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service)*

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