



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

PO Box 1163, Richmond, Virginia 23218

www.vdacs.virginia.gov

Joseph W. Guthrie
Commissioner

February 14, 2022

Dear Virginia Poultry Contacts,

Almost three weeks ago, on January 26, I wrote to inform you of the recent detection of highly pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in wild waterfowl in Virginia, and the implications that had – that HPAI was in the environment, and that those involved with raising poultry should be especially vigilant about biosecurity.

Today, I write in conjunction with the announcement from USDA that HPAI has just been detected in a mixed-species backyard bird flock in Fauquier County, Virginia, as well as on a commercial broiler farm and in a flock of turkeys in Kentucky, to reiterate that recommendation.

The owner of the Fauquier County Virginia backyard flock contacted VDACS late last week about a significant death loss in her backyard chickens, turkeys, and ducks, and samples obtained on February 11 tested positive for HPAI. In the interest of minimizing spread of the disease, and consistent with our Avian Influenza Response Plan, all domestic birds on the premises were depopulated on February 12. The carcasses were incinerated, and the facility will be disinfected. There are no known close contacts/links of these infected birds, and it is clear that the birds obtained HPAI through exposure to wild waterfowl on the property, as there was a pond that the domestic birds had access to, which was also frequented by wild waterfowl. There are no commercial flocks in the immediate area.

Surveillance in the area for any additional sick backyard birds is ongoing, and in part due to the speed with which the birds were removed, indications at this point are that there is no spread of the virus from that location. However, this even further underscores the need to be especially vigilant about biosecurity, as this provides a clear demonstration that many wild waterfowl are infected, and interaction with them or their droppings can cause poultry to become infected.

Please contact our Office of Veterinary Services at (804) 786-2483 if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles C. Broaddus".

Charles C. Broaddus, DVM, PhD, DACT
State Veterinarian

Director, Division of Animal and Food Industry Services