



## DOH Volusia Fact Sheet: Avian or Bird Flu

**EVENT:** In March, five black vultures tested presumptive for H5 HPAI. The birds were part of a black vulture mortality event at Hontoon Island State Park located on the St. Johns River in Volusia County.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission has confirmed cases of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) strain in 24 Florida counties.

A person has tested positive for avian influenza in the U.S., as confirmed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and reported by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment on April 28, 2022. This case occurred in a person who had direct exposure to poultry and who was involved in the culling (depopulating) of poultry with presumptive H5N1 bird flu.

**WHAT:** Avian influenza or bird flu is a respiratory disease of birds caused by influenza A viruses. These viruses occur naturally among wild aquatic birds worldwide. Wild birds such as ducks, gulls, shorebirds can carry and spread these viruses without showing signs of illness. But avian influenza can kill domestic poultry (chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese).

### BIRDS:

- Spreads quickly through bird-to-bird contact.
- Spreads to birds via contaminated surfaces and materials including clothing, shoes, hands, etc.
- Hunters handling game and residents who raise chickens should always wash their hands with soap and water after handling birds.
- Serious concern for poultry industry
- Poultry entering U.S. must test negative for AI prior to entry
- Strains vary in severity and vary between low and high mortality rate.
- 2015-2016 a highly pathogenic avian flu (HPAI) affected poultry in 16 Midwest states
- Poultry should always be cooked to an internal temperature of 165 degrees to kill bacteria, viruses including AI.

### PEOPLE:

- **CDC considers human risk from HPAI in North America to be low.**
- Infected birds shed AI in their saliva, mucous and feces. Human infections occur when enough virus gets into a person's eyes, nose, mouth or is inhaled.
- People with close or prolonged unprotected contact with infected birds or contaminated environments may be at greater risk of infection.
- Person-to-person spread of AI is very rare, and when it has been reported it has been limited, inefficient and not sustained. However, because of the possibility that AI viruses could change and gain the ability to spread easily between people, monitoring for human infection and person-to-person spread is extremely important for public health.
- Symptoms of a human AI range from mild to severe and from conjunctivitis to fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, sometimes accompanied by nausea, abdominal pain, diarrhea, and vomiting, severe respiratory illness (e.g., shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, pneumonia, acute respiratory distress, viral pneumonia, respiratory failure), neurologic changes (altered mental status, seizures), and the involvement of other organ systems

### ACTION:

- Report sick domestic poultry to Florida Department of Agriculture (850) 410-0900 (during office hours) or 1-800-342-5869 (after hours) or by email at [RAD@FDACS.gov](mailto:RAD@FDACS.gov)
- Report dead wild birds to the [Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission](#).

