



John McMillan
Commissioner

STATE OF ALABAMA
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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stop Movement Order Issued on Certain Poultry in Alabama

Montgomery, Ala. — State Veterinarian Dr. Tony Frazier in consultation with Commissioner John McMillan today has issued a stop movement order for certain poultry in Alabama. "The health of poultry is critically important at this time," said Dr. Frazier. "With three investigations of avian influenza in north Alabama on three separate premises we feel that the stop movement order is the most effective way to implement biosecurity for all poultry in our state."

The first two investigations were on two separate premises in north Alabama. One flock of chickens at a commercial breeder operation located in Lauderdale County, Ala. was found to be suspect for avian influenza. No significant mortality in the flock was reported. The other premise was a backyard flock in Madison County, Ala. Samples from both premises have been sent to the USDA National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa and are being tested to determine presence of the virus.

The most recent investigation began following routine surveillance while executing Alabama's HPAI Preparedness and Response Plan. USDA poultry technicians collected samples at the TaCo-Bet Trade Day flea market in Scottsboro located in Jackson County, Ala. on Sunday, March 12. Samples collected were suspect and those samples are on the way to the USDA Lab in Ames, Iowa.

Dr. Frazier reminds poultry owners to be vigilant about biosecurity. It is the department's responsibility to protect backyard flock, exhibition, show and commercial poultry and stopping the movement of certain poultry is the most effective way to do so.

USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is working closely with the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries (ADAI) on a joint incident response. The U.S. has the strongest AI surveillance program in the world and USDA is working with its partners to actively look for the disease in commercial poultry operations, backyard birds, live bird markets and in migratory waterfowl populations.

This suspected strain of avian influenza does not pose a risk to the food supply. No affected poultry entered the food chain. The risk of human infection with avian influenza during poultry outbreaks is very low.

"Following the 2015 avian influenza outbreak in the Midwest, planning, preparation, and extensive biosecurity efforts were escalated in Alabama. Industry, growers, state and federal agencies and other stakeholders have worked hard to maintain a level of readiness," said Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries John McMillan. "Our staff is committed to staying actively involved in the avian influenza situation until any threats are addressed."

Dr. Frazier has been working closely with USDA and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture this past week. He encourages commercial poultry producers and backyard flock owners to observe their birds closely and continue to practice strict biosecurity measures. These include:

- Isolating poultry from other animals
- Wearing clothing designated for use only at the poultry house
- Minimizing access to people and unsanitized equipment
- Keeping the area around the poultry buildings clean and uninviting to wild birds and animals
- Sanitizing the facility between flocks
- Cleaning equipment entering and leaving the farm
- Having an all in, all out policy regarding the placement and removal of the poultry
- Properly disposing of bedding material and mortalities
- Avoiding contact with migratory waterfowl

Frazier reminds all poultry owners and producers to strictly adhere to the biosecurity guidelines mentioned above. During this time, backyard flock owners should refrain from moving birds offsite or introducing new birds. The ADAI Poultry Division is available to answer any questions concerning movement of poultry and should be notified at 334-240-6584 and/or USDA at 1-866-536-7593 if birds show unusual signs of disease (flu-like symptoms) or flocks experiences unexplained mortalities.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System has created a website to assist backyard flock owners with maintaining healthy birds and to provide answers for avian influenza control. It can be found at www.AlabamaAvianInfluenza.com (<http://www.AlabamaAvianInfluenza.com>).

*** A video of today's press conference will be posted to the department's website later today.**