

Biosecurity Protection from Wild Birds

Avian influenza (AI) viruses are present in wild bird populations throughout the world. Typically, wild birds carry AI without being affected, but they can spread the viruses to domestic poultry. Specific AI viruses may cause serious and potentially fatal disease in domestic poultry.

AI viruses are transmitted through bird secretions or feces. The viruses may pass directly from bird-to-bird or indirectly through contaminated feed, water, equipment, boot or clothing.

Domestic poultry owners can implement several measures, collectively known as biosecurity, to protect their flocks from AI. Examples of ways to minimize the risk posed by wild birds include:

- keeping domestic poultry indoors and covering all openings, including vents, with screens to prevent contact between domestic poultry and wild birds;
- storing and using feed and water in an enclosed environment to prevent contamination;
- removing spills of feed and standing water as quickly as possible to avoid attracting wild birds; and
- cleaning potentially contaminated equipment with a commercial disinfectant or a solution of equal parts bleach and water.

The Canadian Food Inspection, in collaboration with a number of partners, monitors AI viruses in wild birds through an annual survey. All viruses detected through this activity are publicly reported.