

Bird Flu Information

FOR NEVADA FARMERS



Bird flu is a virus that usually affects wild and domestic birds. Recently, it was found in dairy cows for the first time. People can get sick after interacting with animals that have the virus.

Bird flu in cows is new. Agricultural, public health, and industry partners are still learning how to stop the spread. The virus probably spreads to people when raw milk, manure, or other animal fluids get in the eyes, nose, or mouth. Taking steps to prevent the spread can help keep you and your farm's animals healthy.

The risk to the public from bird flu is considered low, but the risk might be higher for people who handle:



Sick or dead poultry



Sick or dead wild birds



Infected dairy cows

(cows with bird flu don't always show symptoms)



Infected animal materials

(raw milk, manure or other bodily fluids)

Always take these protective measures while working with animals to protect yourself and animals from diseases:

- **Wash your hands frequently.** Scrub for at least 20 seconds. Dry hands with a disposable paper towel.
- **Don't eat or drink in animal areas.** Wash your hands before eating or drinking.
- **Clean and disinfect animal areas and equipment regularly.**
 - Used/dirty equipment should be cleaned before using again or discarded.
- **Wear clean, protective clothing and equipment** like gloves, long-sleeved shirts, and slip-resistant boots.
 - Clean and disinfect dirty boots before entering a different animal area. Take off dirty boots and clothing before entering your home.
 - Clean dirty boots and clothing before wearing again.
- **Report sick or dead livestock and wildlife** to farm management and Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) or Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW).

Take additional precautions to protect yourself from bird flu.

Consider wearing extra personal protective equipment like a face mask, face shield, or goggles, during activities that could cause animal fluids to splash or form droplets in the air. Remember that cows can be infected with bird flu without seeming sick.

If you become sick: Stay home and contact a doctor. Tell your doctor you work with animals. Notify your manager that you are sick.

Symptoms to look out for:

- ▶ **Eye redness or eye discharge**
- ▶ **Flu or COVID-like symptoms** (like cough, runny nose, sore throat, muscle aches, fever)
- ▶ **Digestive issues** (like nausea, vomiting, diarrhea)



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Managers/Farm Owners

Bird flu infections in humans can be severe. The first human illnesses in the current outbreak have been mild.

Your help in preventing human infections now will help keep it this way.



Reporting Sick Workers or Animals

Reporting sick workers and sick or dead animals allows the state to investigate how people and animals might be getting sick and work to prevent further spread.

To report a sick worker, contact NDA as soon as possible: 775-353-3601

To report sick or dead livestock, contact NDA:

- Diseasereporting@agri.nv.gov
- or 775-353-3709

To report sick or dead wildlife, contact NDOW:

- 775-688-1500
- or scan QR code for the online report form

NDOW Report Form



Protecting Workers from Disease with Protective Equipment



Basic protective equipment and clothing is **always** recommended for workers to protect against injury and infections. **Additional** personal protective equipment (PPE) is recommended for workers who work with sick or potentially sick animals to protect against bird flu. If animals or staff at your farm test positive, **a higher level of PPE will be required.**

Dairy cows can be infected with bird flu without showing any symptoms, so taking precautions before infected animals are identified could be crucial to preventing spread to humans. **Please consider providing your workers with additional PPE to increase protection from bird flu, especially during tasks that could expose them to animal fluids.**

Selecting PPE that is suitable for various jobs can be challenging. The Office of State Epidemiology can help you think through what PPE to request for your farm. For more information, please contact us at stateepi@health.nv.gov.

It's essential that workers are trained and demonstrate a clear understanding of when and how to use PPE. Resources are available to help train your staff effectively. Scan the QR code for more details.

