Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI):

Updated News and Information for Colorado Backyard and Small Poultry Producers

Because of the ongoing disease outbreak and the potential for spillover from wildlife, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) has become of significant importance for small poultry producers. The United States has been hard hit by a growing highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak since late 2014. The first detection of HPAI in this outbreak was reported by Washington State on December 19, 2014. Since that first report, this ongoing outbreak has resulted in the destruction of more than 20 million birds, marking it as the largest avian influenza outbreak in United States history.

HPAI has been identified in wild birds, commercial poultry flocks, and backyard flocks in at least 18 states, located within migratory bird paths designated as the Pacific, Central, and Mississippi flyways. The virus can travel in wild birds without making them appear sick, and wild birds are implicated in the spread of disease. As of May 11, 2015, no cases of HPAI have been reported in Colorado.

Although Colorado has had no cases of HPAI, with virus present in millions of birds and multiple states, several of which share borders with Colorado, the risk of disease entering Colorado is high. Disease prevention is the best way to prevent HPAI infection, and will become of utmost importance in the event that HPAI is identified in the state. The following information contains detailed steps to prevent the introduction of HPAI into your flock.

Disease Prevention is the Best Way to Prevent HPAI

Biosecurity: birds
- Minimize contact with wild birds and waterfowl
  - Consider housing poultry indoors or at minimum within a screened area
  - Remove food and water sources that attract wild birds
- Know the warning signs of infectious bird disease
  - Increase in bird deaths
  - Wheezing, coughing, nasal discharge
  - Decreased energy
  - Decreased feed intake
  - Drop in egg production or egg quality
  - Swelling and/or discoloration of eyes, head, neck
  - Tremors, circling, drooping wings, twisting of head and neck
- Isolate sick birds immediately, away from other birds
  - Tend to sick birds after tending to healthy birds, or have a person dedicated to tending sick birds who does not interact with healthy poultry
- Isolate new birds (30 days), or birds that have been to a fair or exhibition (2 weeks) AWAY from other birds
  - Tend to these birds after tending to your healthy flock, but before tending to sick birds

Biosecurity: trucks and services
- Vehicles that visit other premises with poultry (including the feed store) should park as far as possible from your flock
  - Truck driver should not have contact with your poultry if possible
  - If truck driver has had contact with other poultry premises:
    - boots should be cleaned and disinfected (or better, changed)
    - hands washed with soap and water
    - clothing changed (or clean coveralls worn) before having contact with your flock
  - Truck tires should be cleaned and disinfected before returning home
- Clean and disinfect egg flats between shipments, or use one-time-use disposable egg flats

- o Do not use equipment that cannot be cleaned and disinfected, including wood pallets and cardboard egg cartons

Biosecurity: workers/owners
- No contact with other flocks
- No contact with wildlife, especially sick or dead birds or wildlife
- Minimize number people who have contact with poultry
  - o Those who work with your poultry
  - o Visitors
- Keep tools and equipment clean
  - o Clean cages and food and water containers daily
- Wash hands with soap and water and wear clean boots (or walk through a disinfectant footbath) before working with poultry (and wash and disinfect boots afterward)
  - o Consider having dedicated boots and clothing (coveralls) for working with your flock

Additional Biosecurity Resources:
- USDA: http://healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov
- AVMA: https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/FAQs/Pages/Avian-influenza-FAQs-general.aspx