Media Contact:
Bryan Levin, 614.563.6974
*bryan.levin@agri.ohio.gov*

## ****Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Detected in Ashland and Defiance Counties****

###

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (September 6, 2022) - Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) has been detected in a backyard flock in Ashland County and a commercial chicken flock in Defiance County. The positive detections were confirmed by the United States Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS). The samples were first tested at the Ohio Department of Agriculture’s Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory and confirmed at the APHIS National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa.

HPAI is a highly contagious virus that spreads quickly and can be fatal to flocks and devastating to poultry owners, both commercial and non-commercial. HPAI can infect poultry (such as chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, domestic ducks, geese, and guinea fowl) and is carried by free flying waterfowl such as ducks, geese, and shorebirds.

State officials quarantined the affected premises, and birds on the properties will be depopulated to prevent the spread of the disease. Federal and State partners are working jointly on additional surveillance and testing in areas around the affected flocks. Surveillance activities will be conducted in a 10-kilometer zone around the infected premises.

The recent HPAI detections [**do not present an immediate public health concern**](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https*3A*2F*2Fwww.cdc.gov*2Fflu*2Favianflu*2Favian-flu-summary.htm&data=05*7C01*7Cmeghan.harshbarger*40agri.ohio.gov*7C030680a3f20e4572848708da9019f3a2*7C50f8fcc494d84f0784eb36ed57c7c8a2*7C0*7C0*7C637980738394033047*7CUnknown*7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0*3D*7C3000*7C*7C*7C&sdata=T2dppf*2B6weMh2T768GAihxD4oY7Va63R2b8a*2Fv*2BUYnU*3D&reserved=0__;JSUlJSUlJSUlJSUlJSUlJSUlJSUlJSUlJQ!!KGKeukY!xSz-7sRFwsQCKaElTkPqKQeapWXplamDPUP5eECmQAvuG5W-w7PJkMmC41HibWwyZkP1zO6diS7DNJL7-yRyNJQG8vH2jUaB$), according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. No human cases have been detected in the United States. According to USDA, HPAI cannot be transmitted through properly cooked meats or eggs. Products from any HPAI-affected flocks are prohibited from entering the food system. As a reminder, the proper handling and cooking of all poultry and eggs to an internal temperature of 165 ˚F is recommended as a general food safety precaution.

The best defense against HPAI is **vigilant disease prevention**. Biosecurity and best management practices include:

* **Prevent contact with wild birds and waterfowl.** Keep birds indoors when possible.
* **Keep visitors to essential personnel only.**Only allow those who care for your poultry to have contact with them and make sure they follow biosecurity principles.
* **Wash your hands before and after contact with live poultry**. Use soap and water. If using a hand sanitizer, first remove manure, feathers, and other materials from your hands.
* **Provide disposable boot covers (preferred) and/or disinfectant footbaths for anyone having contact with your flock.**If using a footbath, remove all droppings, mud or debris from boots and shoes using a long-handled brush BEFORE stepping in. Always keep it clean.
* **Establish a rodent and pest control program**. Deliver, store, and maintain feed, ingredients, bedding, and litter to limit exposure to and contamination from wild animals.
* **Use drinking water sourced from a contained supply** (well or municipal system). Do not use surface water for drinking or cleaning.
* **Clean and disinfect tools and equipment before moving them to a new poultry facility.**Trucks, tractors, tools, and equipment should be cleaned and disinfected prior to entering or exiting the property. Do not move or reuse anything that cannot be cleaned.
* **Look for signs of illness**. Monitor egg production and death loss, discoloration and/or swelling of legs, wattles and combs, labored breathing, reduced feed/water consumption.

**If you notice any symptoms or unexpected deaths in your flock, please report them immediately to the Ohio Poultry Association (614.882.6111), or the Ohio Department of Agriculture (regular business hours: 614.728.6220; after hours: 888.456.3405).**