

Dear 4-H youth and volunteers engaged in poultry projects:

As of June 11, 2022, the statewide stop on poultry and waterfowl exhibitions put in place [by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development](#) (MDARD) [has been lifted](#). The stop was implemented as a precautionary measure made in the interest of animal and public health on May 10 to further protect against the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) and to safeguard Michigan's domestic poultry flocks.

With the lifting of the stop, county and regional fairs, as well as other local groups may once again host live bird shows and events. In addition, avian species are again allowed to be displayed as part of 4-H projects, including shows, club or group meetings, petting zoos, and at other events or venues. This includes but is not limited to chickens, pheasants, turkeys, quail, water fowl, guinea fowl and pea fowl, emus, ostriches, parrots and parakeets. **However, the status of local, county and regional shows will be determined by the governing boards of each event.** Local 4-H staff will work closely with their community fair partners to determine what will be offered to their county 4-H poultry participants at the fair. Please look for additional information in the coming weeks from your local 4-H staff to determine how your local events will be impacted.

While the stop has been lifted, MDARD continues to vigilantly monitor national HPAI trends and quickly respond to reports of sick or dead domestic birds in Michigan. If there are any subsequent detections of the virus in the state's domestic flocks, the situation will be thoroughly assessed and evaluated by MDARD to determine if another stop is warranted to mitigate the spread of HPAI.

Although the stop being lifted is an encouraging step forward, continuing preventative measures to keep domestic flocks healthy is needed to maintain this positive momentum. This includes:

- Preventing contact between domestic and wild birds by bringing them indoors or ensuring their outdoor area is fully enclosed.
- Washing your hands before and after handling birds as well as when moving between different coops.
- Disinfecting boots and other gear when moving between coops.
- Not sharing equipment or other supplies between coops or other farms.
- Cleaning and disinfecting equipment and other supplies between uses. If it cannot be disinfected, discard it.
- Using well or municipal water as drinking water for birds.
- Keeping poultry feed secure to ensure there is no contact between the feed/feed ingredients and wild birds or rodents.
- Separating birds that show any sign of illness and caring for them only after caring for healthy birds.
- Wearing clean clothing and footwear that has not been worn in a home coop into public venues such as fairs.

If you suspect a bird in your flock may be sick with avian influenza, contact MDARD immediately at 800-292-3939 (daytime) or 517-373-0440 (after-hours). Signs of HPAI include unusual deaths, drop in egg production and significant decrease in water consumption.

As a reminder, the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) indicates the public health risk associated with avian influenza remains low. No birds or bird products infected with HPAI will enter the commercial food chain and poultry and eggs remain safe to eat when [properly handled](#) and cooked.

MSU Extension continues to work closely with MDARD and the Michigan Association of Fairs and Exhibitions to monitor the situation and will notify and advise 4-H families when important updates arise.

Thank you for your continued assistance in helping to protect Michigan flocks.

Sincerely,

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