

Avian flu is in Alaska

The first case was detected in a noncommercial backyard flock in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough in late April. It was likely brought in by migratory birds, according to Alaska State Veterinarian Dr. Robert Gerlach.

What to look for:

- Sudden death of multiple birds in the flock
- Nasal discharge, sneezing, and coughing, or respiratory distress
- A significant drop in water consumption, diarrhea, lethargy, abnormal behavior or difficulty walking,
- Blue discoloration of the comb and wattles or a swollen comb, wattles, legs, or head

What you can do:

- Report suspected avian influenza cases in your animals or wild birds to your veterinarian or Gerlach at 907-375-8215
- Protect poultry flocks from coming into contact with wild or migratory birds
- Keep poultry away from any source of water that may have been contaminated by wild birds
- Permit only essential workers and vehicles to enter the farm
- Provide clean clothes and disinfection facilities for employees
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect equipment and vehicles (including tires and undercarriage) entering and leaving the farm
- Do not loan or borrow equipment or vehicles from other farms
- Avoid visiting other poultry farms. If you do visit another farm or live bird market, change your footwear and clothing before working with your flock
- Do not bring birds from slaughter channels, especially live bird markets, back to the farm.

For more information, contact Stephen Brown, Agriculture and Horticulture agent in Palmer, (907) 745-3639, scbrown4@alaska.edu

