



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Randy Olson, Executive Director
515.727.4701 or randy@iowapoultry.com



April 30, 2015

**Iowa Poultry Association Cites Urgency
Regarding Avian Influenza Impact on Iowa Egg Industry**
Iowa Ag Secretary says a total of 11 egg-related farms in Iowa now affected

(URBANDALE, Iowa)— The Iowa Poultry Association and Iowa Egg Council have been informed of a total of 11 cases of avian influenza on commercial farms, all in northwest Iowa. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardships announced three of those poultry cases just today—two in Sioux County and one each in Buena Vista County, Kossuth County and Clay County.

With the latest notifications, Executive Director Randy Olson says this remains a serious and urgent situation for the poultry industry, yet reassures consumers they do not face health concerns with consumption of chicken or eggs.

On behalf of his organizations, Olson has been working in concert with state and federal regulatory agencies, urging them to swiftly and rigorously coordinate efforts to address and curtail the disease.

“We recognize this issue is overwhelming in many respects for all those involved, and government leaders have been diligent in their response,” says Olson. “The H5N2 virus is aggressive, able to decimate a flock within 48 hours. While it’s believed that migratory bird droppings have caused the outbreaks throughout the Midwest, and while each of these Iowa-based farms maintained strict biosecurity measures, it’s vital for government leaders to continue to communicate the methods by which the avian influenza is spreading and then find methods to stop it.”

Just as with the earlier confirmed cases, safety and security measures are in full force to contain the spread of the disease. Olson says “It’s an absolute necessity for everyone, including the public, to avoid going anywhere near these farms to prevent this disease from spreading. “

-more-

To date, the quarantined egg-related farms are:

1. Osceola County laying hen farm with 3.8 million birds
2. Osceola County Pullet farm with 250,000 birds
3. O'Brien County laying hen farm with 240,000 birds
4. O'Brien County laying hen farm with 98,000 birds
5. Buena Vista County laying hen farm with 63,000 birds
6. Sioux County laying hen farm with two locations totaling 1.7 million birds
7. Sioux County laying hen farm with 3.66 million birds
8. Sioux County laying hen farm with 84,000
9. Kossuth County chicken breeder with 19,000 birds
10. Buena Vista County laying hen farm with 5.5 million birds
11. Clay County laying hen farm with initial testing completed; number of birds pending

Turkey and chicken producers as well as egg farmers already have comprehensive measures in place to limit the spread of avian influenza. Rigorous biosecurity guidelines include:

- Restricting on-farm access to essential employees only;
- Following on-farm disinfecting procedures such as the use of foot baths;
- Limiting movement between farm operations;
- Requiring protective gear be used at all times for anyone who enters egg farms; and
- Working closely with animal health experts and veterinarians to monitor flocks.

“Our message to all poultry owners, even those who own a single bird in the backyard from chickens to turkeys and ducks, is to pay attention and follow biosecurity steps,” Olson says. “It’s up to everyone to be vigilant in their observation of their flock, looking for signs and working with a local vet to bring an end to this situation.”

Avian influenza is an infectious disease of birds caused by type A strains of the influenza virus. The identified strains identified are not a threat to human health. The disease is not carried in foods (eggs, chicken or turkey).

Agricultural experts believe that as temperatures rise, the outbreaks should subside as the virus thrives only in cooler weather.

Iowa is the leading egg producer in the U.S. providing about one in five eggs sold nationwide.

About the Iowa Egg Council

The [Iowa Egg Council](#) is a producer-supported organization established in 1973. Its mission is to increase consumption of eggs through promotion, education and research.

About the Iowa Poultry Association

The [Iowa Poultry Association](#) provides for industry response to consumer, regulatory, environmental and political issues, joining forces with members to accomplish what individual firms can't do alone. IPA helps create a strong climate in Iowa for egg and poultry farmers through efforts to educate and inform.

###