



## **Basic Biosecurity for All Service Providers to Poultry Farms**

The disease threat to Georgia's economically important poultry industry is at an unprecedented level due to the Avian Influenza outbreak in the Midwest and the very real possibility that it could arrive in Georgia with migratory waterfowl. While visitors are discouraged from going onto poultry farms, it is sometimes necessary for essential services to be provided through farm visits.

The following guidelines are practical measures that **HAVE TO** be undertaken in order to mitigate the risk of spreading avian influenza or other poultry diseases:

### What to have on hand:

If service is provided inside the chicken house: Coveralls, disposable boots, hairnet, Lysol (or equivalent spray disinfectant effective against influenza virus), and hand sanitizer must be used by visitors prior to entering.

If service is provided on the farm but outside the chicken house: Lysol and hand sanitizer must be utilized.

- Please notify the poultry grower by telephone that a service visit is taking place so that the grower can meet you at the farm entrance to disinfect your vehicle's tires.
- If a poultry farm has a "bio-security station" at the entrance to the farm, please stop and follow instructions. The station may include a visitor's log which should be signed and a pump-up sprayer for disinfecting tires. Please follow any other instructions that might be provided through signage at the entry station.
- In the event that a service provider *needs to enter the poultry house*, strict bio-security measures must be followed. The provider will have with him, and will wear coveralls, disposable boots, and a hairnet. He will spray disinfect his tools and supplies (Lysol). In the case that a provider does not have the necessary protective equipment, the grower should meet you at the farm and provide protective clothing. There will also be a bio-security protocol to follow upon entering the poultry house, such as stepping in a foot pan. This is a very important protective step that must be followed.
- If the service provided is *in the immediate vicinity of the poultry house*, visitors should spray their footwear with Lysol (or equivalent disinfectant which is labeled as effective at killing influenza virus) **BEFORE** exiting the vehicle. Hand sanitizer should also be used before exiting the vehicle. This process should be repeated when the visitor returns to the vehicle.
  - **Meter Reading:** Many of the meters on poultry farms are read remotely. In cases where meters are still read manually, we encourage utilities to consider implementing a plan that would allow them to avoid farm visits to read meters if an emergency response to avian influenza in Georgia becomes necessary.

- In situations where a service provider enters a farm to provide service or repairs not in the immediate vicinity of the poultry houses, they should still follow the bio-security instructions provided by the grower or signage posted at the entry of the farm. In these cases, spraying footwear with Lysol would be a good extra precaution to take.
- If avian influenza is discovered in Georgia, control zones will be established at a 6 mile radius of the infected farm. Service providers will be kept informed about the zones and status of the control efforts. In this scenario, it might be necessary to have a higher level of bio-security measures in place. Options include having pump-up disinfectant sprayers on service vehicles operating in these areas in addition to Lysol for footwear and hand sanitizer. Another good option is to make contact with the grower before entering the farm so that the service vehicle can be met at the farm entrance. This is especially important if the service vehicle is traveling from one poultry farm directly to another.
- Individuals who come into contact with “backyard” chickens or other birds during their daily lives pose a higher risk to commercial poultry operations. Employees who provide services in the immediate area of a poultry house should take precautions to reduce the risk of spreading avian diseases if they come into contact with backyard birds, pet birds or fowl (including ducks and geese) at gatherings such as flea markets and swap meets. Ideally, clothing and footwear worn at these outside activities would not be worn on the job. If the same footwear is worn on the job, then it is critical that the shoes/boots be disinfected thoroughly using a Lysol spray or other product effective at killing influenza viruses and that hand sanitizer be used prior to providing any service on the farm. Individuals who have contact with backyard chickens or other birds during their daily lives should not provide services inside a chicken house regardless of the bio-security measures taken.
- Individuals providing services on poultry farms who hunt birds should not wear any items used while hunting to work on these farms and should not use the work vehicle for bird hunting. In the case of inadvertent contact with wild or domestic birds, service providers who must enter poultry houses should shower and change all clothing prior to providing service on a poultry farm.
- Companies that provide services on poultry farms are asked to communicate with their employees about the increased risk of spreading avian diseases to commercial poultry farms if they have contact with backyard chickens and other birds outside of work. If an employee reports that they have such contact with birds outside of work, it would be ideal if work schedules could be arranged to have other employees handle poultry farm service work. If this is not possible, service providers are encouraged to strictly follow the bio-security recommendations outlined above.