



A Quick Guide to Signs of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

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Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) is a contagious disease of poultry that causes high mortality in affected flocks. It spreads easily and can devastate commercial and backyard flocks if left uncontained. HPAI is classified as a Foreign Animal Disease by the United States Department of Agriculture and is listed also as a reportable disease, so that flocks infected with HPAI must be reported to the World Organization for Animal Health. It is essential that every occurrence of the disease be found and eradicated as soon as possible.

One characteristic of HPAI is that the disease affects most of a flock rapidly. Therefore, while it is important never to ignore the symptoms listed below, it is especially important to call the Georgia Poultry Lab Avian Influenza Hotline, **(770) 766-6850**, immediately if multiple birds in a flock (10% or more) start to show signs.

Signs of Avian Influenza: (these may occur in combination)

1. Sudden increase in bird deaths (10% or more of the flock)
2. Swelling of the head, eyelids, comb, wattles, or hocks
3. Purple or darkened color of wattles, comb, or legs
4. Coughing, sneezing
5. Nasal discharge
6. Lack of coordination or paralysis
7. Diarrhea, particularly green diarrhea
8. Ruffled feathers
9. Lethargy and poor appetite
10. Drop in egg production, or soft-shell or misshapen eggs

Poultry with symptoms like these don't necessarily have avian influenza because other infectious bird diseases cause similar signs; but don't try to be your own diagnostician. Laboratory analysis is often necessary to diagnose the disease agent. Call the Georgia Poultry Lab Avian Influenza Hotline and let poultry veterinarians advise the appropriate action.

Georgia Poultry Lab Avian Influenza Hotline: (770) 766-6850.