

Dead Bird – Now What?

How many birds have died?
What are the signs of illness that were seen?



Hi Doctor – we have had a death in the flock and are looking for some advice.



Okay. We can take a look at the rest of the flock and talk about other diagnostics. In the meantime, let's put the dead bird in a cooler on ice packs.



Necropsy

Benefits:

- Can help give producers an insight into the individual and herd health status.
- Can help us better understand the reason behind the death and allow for us to explore treatment options.

Process:

- Call Veterinarian – They will help facilitate preparation for sending carcass out.
- Place sample into Ziplock bag. Refrigerate or put sample on ice – Do NOT freeze.
- Fill out paperwork fully and to the best of ability



STOP DISEASE FROM REACHING FLOCK



Buying new poultry from NPIP certified flocks means purchasing from flocks that are annually monitored for *Salmonella Pullorum* and *Salmonella Gallinarum*.



ISOLATE:

- Limit the number of visitors
- New or returning birds should be quarantined for a minimum of 2 weeks.
- Sick birds should be separated immediately.

HYGEINE

Sanitation of Equipment:

- Sanitation of farm vehicles and tractors
- Disinfect cleaning supplies
- Disinfect food and water troughs

Designated Dirty Areas:

- Manure Management
- Designated Plan for Dead Birds

Before Entering and After Leaving Bird Areas:



- Wash Hands
- Designated Clothes
- Designated Shoes

HOUSING & FEED STORAGE

Pest Control:

Prevent the introduction and spread of disease on the farm with:

- Rodent Control
- Insect Control
- Isolation from non-domesticated or unfamiliar birds



Housing Considerations:

- Ventilation – movement of air to encourage fresh air movement in and unwanted particles and odors out
- Separate waterfowl from other species of birds to prevent spread of Avian Influenza

Need More Help?

Colorado State University's Avian Health Hotline - Call: 970-297-4008 or Email: vd1_avianhotline@colostate.edu
Colorado State University - Extension: <https://veterinary.extension.colostate.edu/animal-types/avian-poultry/>

USDA Defend The Flock - <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program/df-resources/df-resources>

Dead Bird – Now What?

Necropsy

- Call Veterinarian about dead bird in the flock. The doctor and flock owner should discuss how to move forward with possible diagnostics or a flock health check.

If choosing to have a necropsy done:

- Fill out paperwork (often with the help of a veterinarian) should include a history, a list of the signs of illness, and any other relevant information needed for diagnostic lab.
- Place bird carcass into a Ziplock bag.
- Place bird on ice in a shipping cooler or in the refrigerator until ready to ship.
- If shipping – be sure to fill out and follow guidelines of FedEx Biological Substances Category.

To find out more please visit: [Avian Sample Submission and Drop-off information.pdf](#)

Buying New Poultry

- Buy new poultry from NPIP certified flocks. NPIP flocks. These producers are annually surveyed for *Salmonella Pullorum* and *Salmonella Gallinarum*. These flocks are also tested and monitored for other highly infectious diseases such as Avian Influenza.

To find out more about NPIP Flocks, please visit: <http://csu-cvmb.colostate.edu/vdl/avian-diagnostics/Pages/npip-program.aspx>
-OR- <http://www.poultryimprovement.org>

Isolate

- Isolate bird area from high traffic areas on your property.
- Limit the amount visitors that you allow in bird areas – if you do allow visitors request that they wear clean clothing and shoes.
- When purchasing new birds or are returning from an event, a minimum of 2 weeks of quarantine is needed to monitor the bird for any signs of disease. This should reduce introduction of foreign diseases to the established flock.
- If a sick bird appears in the flock, immediate separation is warranted to prevent spread of disease.

Sanitation of Equipment

- Wash and disinfect farm vehicles before moving into bird areas – especially after going to areas with a lot of unfamiliar birds.
- Clean sanitize equipment such as tractors, shovels, and rakes that are used in different areas or different bird houses.
- Wash and disinfect feed and water troughs often and especially before moving in new birds.

Designated Dirty Areas

- Have a designated area to dispose of used and dirty litter after it has been soiled to an unacceptable amount.
- Have a plan on how to dispose of dead birds and get the dead animals out of bird area quickly. This should help eliminate any unwanted pests, predators, and also reduce exposure to healthy animals.

For more information on how to properly dispose of mortalities: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/emergency-management/carcass-management>

Before Entering and After Leaving Bird Areas

All of these tasks should be done to prevent bringing in diseases that are foreign to the flock. When leaving birds areas these tasks should be done in order to prevent spreading disease normal to your flock from entering common places such as a feed store.

- Wash hands
- Change into designated clothing. – Clothing should only be worn in the bird areas and should be taken off immediately after leaving the area.
- Change into designated shoes. – Shoes should only be worn in the bird areas and should be taken off immediately after leaving the area.

Housing & Feed Storage

Pest prevention is key to prevent disease introduction and maintain cleanliness of the operation.

- Rodent Control
- Insect Control
- Isolation from non-domesticated or unfamiliar birds

Housing Considerations:

- Ventilation – Ventilation will encourage fresh air movement of oxygen in while pushing carbon dioxide, dust, and odors out.
- Separation of Waterfowl – Waterfowl are natural reservoirs of Avian Influenza. Waterfowl can pass the virus through nasal secretions and feces therefore other species of birds should be separated and not allowed to have contact with equipment or share space.