



Stakeholder Announcement

USDA Confirms H5 Avian Influenza in Washington State Wild Birds H5N2 Found in Northern Pintail Ducks & H5N8 Found in Captive Gyrfalcons

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16, 2014— The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) confirmed the presence of highly pathogenic (HPAI) H5 avian influenza in wild birds in Whatcom County, Washington. Two separate virus strains were identified: HPAI H5N2 in northern pintail ducks and HPAI H5N8 in captive Gyrfalcons that were fed hunter-killed wild birds. Neither virus has been found in commercial poultry anywhere in the United States.

There is no immediate public health concern with either of these avian influenza viruses. Both H5N2 and H5N8 viruses have been found in other parts of the world and have not caused any human infection to date.

The finding in Whatcom County was quickly reported and identified due to increased surveillance for avian influenza in light of the HPAI H5N2 avian influenza affecting commercial poultry in British Columbia, Canada.

Washington State, USDA, and other Federal partners are working jointly on additional surveillance and testing of birds in the nearby area.

All bird owners, whether commercial producers or backyard enthusiasts, are encouraged to practice good biosecurity, prevent contact between their birds and wild birds, and to report sick birds or unusual bird deaths to State/Federal officials, either through your state veterinarian or through USDA's toll-free number at 1-866-536-7593. Additional information on biosecurity for backyard flocks can be found at healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov