

# Avian Influenza (AI)

## Surveillance Efforts

Beginning in April 2005, the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) partnered with multiple State and Federal agencies to implement a comprehensive surveillance program for the early detection of avian influenza (AI) in U.S. poultry and wild bird populations.

## Wild Birds

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) worked cooperatively with the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), State wildlife management agencies, and others to develop a national surveillance plan for the early detection of highly pathogenic AI (HPAI) subtype H5N1. The plan focused primarily on wild, migratory species, including ducks, geese, and shorebirds.

### NAHLN Laboratories Approved To Conduct AI Testing



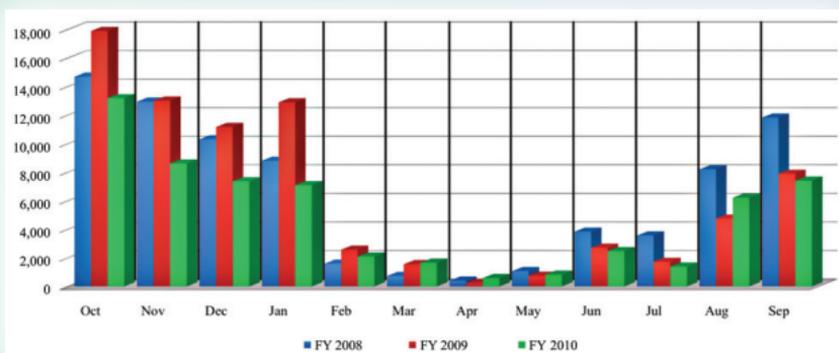
USDA and its partners implemented the surveillance plan in 2006. State wildlife agencies provided sample-collection support; NAHLN laboratories and the National Wildlife Health Center (Madison, WI) handled diagnostic screening tests; and USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) conducted all confirmatory testing of wild bird samples. Once diagnostic analyses were complete, all participant data were centrally located at the National Biological Information Infrastructure's Wildlife Disease Information Node.

Wild bird sampling has served as an important early warning system for detecting HPAI in order to protect the poultry industry and establish what types of low pathogenic AI viruses are naturally circulating in these populations. Samples were tested across 35 NAHLN laboratories in States where the highest risk of HPAI entry via wild birds was determined based on a number of criteria deemed important by wildlife experts.

## Domestic Poultry

USDA poultry staffs at the Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health (CEAH) also collaborated to develop an AI surveillance plan for commercial poultry, live-bird markets, and backyard flocks. Implementing this plan was a cooperative, Federal-State-industry effort, with State and Federal field staff collecting test samples, NAHLN laboratories performing antigen-detection assays, USDA National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP)-certified laboratories performing antibody-detection assays, NVSL performing all confirmatory testing, and regional epidemiologists and staffs with USDA performing centralized data collection and analysis.

### AI Surveillance by NAHLN Laboratories, FY 2008–2010



*This graph shows the number of samples tested by month for AI by NAHLN laboratories for fiscal years 2008 through 2010.*

## National Animal Health Laboratory Network

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