



Defend the Flock Newsletter / Summer Edition 2020

Defend the Flock: Your Biosecurity Bulletin

TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS: Defend Your Flock From Poultry Disease: Know the Signs and How to Respond

USDA APHIS hosted a free webinar to share important information on recognizing the signs and symptoms of poultry disease and best practices for disease prevention. APHIS brought together a team of experts, including:

- **Dr. Julie Gauthier**, Assistant Director for Poultry Health/Veterinary Medical Officer, USDA APHIS Veterinary Services
- **Dr. Tahseen Aziz**, Staff Veterinarian, North Carolina Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory System
- **Dr. Michael Martin**, Director of Poultry Programs, Veterinary Division, North Carolina Department of Agriculture

Listen to the webinar and review the follow-up Q&A at the **Defend the Flock** Resource Center, under the "Webinars" tab.

To find your closest Official State Agent or NPIP authorized diagnostic laboratory, visit the NPIP website at www.poultryimprovement.org

Q&A Vet for a Day: A Talk with Dr. Kathryn Burden

We asked Dr. Kathryn Burden, VDM in USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Veterinary Services, what it's like to "Defend our Flocks."



1. What led you to specialize in poultry medicine? My involvement with poultry started with my high school Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter, which led to a part-time job in a laboratory dedicated to poultry research. At the University of Georgia (UGA), I majored in Poultry, Animal and Dairy Science and worked on projects related to Salmonella mitigation in meat and poultry products. After finishing veterinary school at UGA, I joined the Georgia Poultry Laboratory in Gainesville, GA as the Department Director of Bacteriology and as a Diagnostic Veterinarian for the commercial and backyard poultry industry.

In 2020, I became a Veterinary Medical Officer (VMO) with the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP). My previous experiences mesh well with the USDA APHIS mission to safeguard the health of our nation's agricultural resources and the NPIP mission to improve poultry and poultry products throughout the country.

2. We understand that the NPIP is a voluntary program. What is the value of getting certified? Participation in NPIP provides growers with health papers for shows, state or local poultry sales, and moving birds across state lines. NPIP certification also makes poultry producers eligible for compensation for certain disease outbreaks, pending approval of USDA APHIS. For more information, speak to your Official State Agent (OSA).

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Report Sick Birds

If you see signs of illness, take action right away!

Veterinarian
Cooperative Extension Office
State Veterinarian/Animal or Poultry Diagnostic Lab
USDA

Phone Number

866.536.7593





Do You Recognize Normal Poultry Behavior?



While lethargy is a sign of illness, this mama hen isn't sick. She's just sitting on her eggs.



The droopy tail and hunched back are signs that this bird isn't feeling well.

Test your know-how and share with the hashtag **#FlockDefender**.

Visit the *Defend the Flock* website on aphis.usda.gov for more tips!

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3. What diseases are covered by the NPIP? *Salmonella, Mycoplasma and avian influenza are three of the biggest poultry pathogens that can devastate the commercial industry and drastically affect international trade.*

4. How can smaller and backyard growers apply NPIP principles to their operations? *Make a list of all of the areas where you see a potential "breach" of your facility and try to fix those problem areas, such as holes in fencing or gates that allow people, animals, or pests to have easy access to your poultry. Don't overlook things such as access to clean feed and water sources to keep your poultry from ingesting detrimental microorganisms. Proper feed/water storage and vegetation control around your premises will help deter rodents and other pests from congregating on your property and transmitting disease.*

Many of the bacteria and viruses that infect poultry can easily remain on hair, clothing, and shoes for days. Always spray or dip your shoes in disinfectant upon exiting your coop, wash your clothing with hot water regularly, and shower as soon as possible. Simple changes in clothing and footwear before entering or leaving your coop ensures that you are not spreading diseases.

Prevention is better than treatment. With a few simple biosecurity practices, flock owners can have a lot of control over the risks to their flock's health.

- Dr. Kathryn Burden

If you see signs of illness in your birds, take action right away and report sick birds at 866-536-7593 or visit the *Defend the Flock* website on aphis.usda.gov for resources.

For more information about how to keep your flocks healthy, follow **Defend the Flock** on **Facebook** and **Twitter** and visit www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth/defendtheflock.

