

# KSU Poultry Newsletter

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*[asi.ksu.edu/poultrynewsletter](http://asi.ksu.edu/poultrynewsletter)*

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## Information about Required Pullorum Testing for Bird Sales, County Fairs, and Shows

Any poultry brought together from different sources for an event in Kansas must show proof of a negative pullorum test. Testing is required of all chickens, turkeys, and game birds, regardless of age, but does not include waterfowl or pigeons. The National Poultry Improvement Program (NPIP) was established to help eradicate this disease of poultry.

In Kansas, this program is administered by the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Division of Animal Health. The Department has more information on their web site at [Agriculture.ks.gov](http://Agriculture.ks.gov).

For sales and shows, a supervisor should maintain a list of all testing information (and forms) submitted by participants. The birds must be tested by a certified testing agent. Certified testing agents are listed at the Department of Agriculture web site, or it may be more convenient to designate a person to be the certified tester in your area. Once certified, a tester may test any birds by request, including their own birds. The test is not difficult, and certified testers must pass an informational exam, then maintain an annual license to continue testing. To get started, learn about how to conduct the testing from Kansas State Research and Extension at <https://www.ksu.edu/research-and-extension/poultry/npip-testing-program/>

## Poultry Owners Must Remain Aware of Avian Influenza

Since our last newsletter, more small flocks and commercial farms have suffered from avian influenza. Now is the time to keep biosecurity as strong as possible. The biggest risk still seems to be migrating waterfowl, so keep distance between your flock and birds that congregate near your birds from things like farm ponds and fields where waterfowl are resting and feeding.

Remember to be a good neighbor and keep distance between operation and other farms and commercial flocks. An important biosecurity rule is that things sometimes happen, so plan for it, and try to keep the spread to a minimum.

As a reminder, symptoms of avian influenza in poultry include unexplained death that may occur quickly, swelling of combs and wattles, open mouth breathing that looks like they are trying to swallow air, swelling of legs, swelling around the eyelids and face, and purple coloration in any of parts of the head. If you encounter birds that have all of these symptoms, you should report the incidence to the USDA APHIS at 1-866-536-7593 or your local or state veterinarian.

## Caring for Mail Order Chicks

It's that time of the year when lots of orders for chicks through the mail start arriving. Although chicks have the capability of extended survival after hatching, it is important that extra care is given when they arrive to get them started quickly. Know the delivery date and have your brooder set up early to be sure it is functioning. Pick them up from the US Postal Service promptly. They are likely to have been in transit for a while.

Get them comfortable. Chicks arriving in summer are sometimes overheated, so provide the proper temperature quickly, whatever is required. You can tell if the chicks are too cold by placing the bottom of their foot on your neck or back of your hand.

Make it a priority that chicks drink water as soon as you place them. To look for dehydration, turn the chick over and examine the hocks and legs. Dehydration causes darker red hocks and the veins to show on the back of the shanks, with patches of dry skin.

Nipple drinkers are excellent for poultry, but for the first day or two, try supplementing water using gravity units until they locate the nipple drinkers. Take several chicks and dip the tip of their beaks in the water so they know where to look. After most are drinking, provide feed in the form of mash or crumbles. Besides the feeder, place a bit of feed on a paper towel so they can walk through it. Provide good bright light for the first 3 days so that the chicks are able to locate food and water. You can determine if they are consuming water and food by examining the crop for fullness.

## **Q and A of the Month: If I purchase some birds from a neighbor, and set up a quarantine in a different coop or barn for 30 days, will this ensure that I don't accidentally introduce avian influenza into my own flock?**

The quick answer is NO! Though the kind of quarantine you describe is probably helpful for other diseases and parasites, it would be difficult to keep infected birds on your farm from infecting your other birds. We know this because a zone is set up around an avian influenza infected facility for a long distance while movement of birds is stopped, and the birds are tested to determine how it has spread. A virus like avian influenza can move easily on shoes, clothing, and even through the air, so it's unlikely that on-premises isolation would prevent the virus from moving around your farm.

That doesn't mean that a quarantine is not useful! This time (normally 30 days) can be used to treat new birds for parasites, give them special nutrition to grow or get into shape, and allow them time to adjust to facilities and environments. This practice may also help with any behavior issues to limit cannibalism and fighting between the old and new birds.

## Q and A of the Month #2: What happens if a farm near me tests positive for avian influenza?

Because avian influenza may have spread an unknown distance around an infected flock, producers in the surrounding area are notified by the task force at the Kansas Division of Animal Health to help stop the spread. Depending on the type of infection, a zone may be set around the area to check the movement of birds until more data is obtained to determine if the virus has spread. Information about how to stop the spread, what the symptoms may include, and how to proceed will be provided. If within the zone, any movement of birds and sales of commercial products must be done so under a permit. If you have questions about potentially being located with a zone, you may contact KDA's Division of Animal Health at 833-765-2006 or email at [KDA.HPAI@ks.gov](mailto:KDA.HPAI@ks.gov).



Keyanna Clemons, Senior in Animal Sciences and Industry, helps with the poultry display in Call Hall at the KSU Open House, April 9, 2022. Keyanna works at the KSU Poultry and Gamebird Research Center. She has participated in the Midwest Poultry Consortium Center of Excellence and will graduate in May, 2022.

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