



# Biosecurity: Avian Influenza

Written by: Twila Parish-Short, MEd., Science Educator

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## Introduction

The risk of Avian Influenza (AI or Bird Flu) for backyard flocks is low, but not zero. The more contact your birds have with wild or migrating birds, the higher the risk of exposure. Thankfully, there are simple steps you can take to keep your flock healthy and safe.



*A healthy flock*

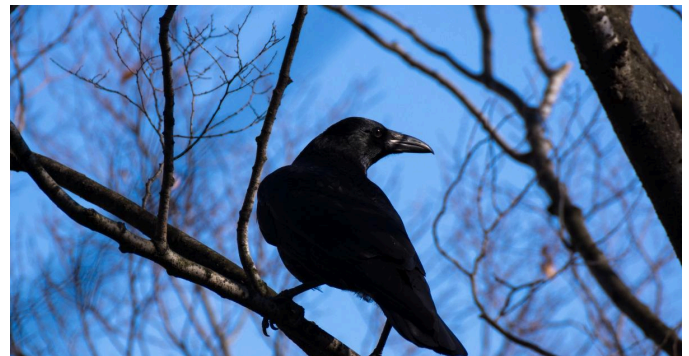
Follow these best practices to help protect your birds—and yourself—from bird flu:

### Practice Good Biosecurity

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after handling birds, their droppings, or their food and water.
- Disinfect equipment regularly—this includes feeders, waterers, tools, and anything else that comes into contact with your flock.
- Wear dedicated clothing and footwear when entering the chicken area. Easy on/off boots that handle mud and puddles well are a great

option—and they make sticking to protocols easier.

- Restrict visitor access to your coop. Chickens may be fun and friendly, but your backyard isn't a petting zoo. If visitors must enter, ensure they wash their hands and wear clean footwear.
- Quarantine new birds before introducing them to your existing flock. This reduces the risk of bringing in illness.
- Keep the coop and run clean by regularly removing waste, bedding, and debris, and disinfecting all surfaces.



*A wild bird example: Crow*

### Prevent Contact with Wild Birds

- **Enclose your coop and run** to prevent wild birds from accessing your flock's space.
- **Trim trees** and remove areas where wild birds may roost near your coop.
- **Avoid open water sources** like ponds and creeks where wild birds gather—especially

during migration season.


- **Keep feeders and waterers clean and covered.** Store feed in sealed containers, and clean up any spills right away to avoid attracting wild birds.

## Monitor for Signs of Avian Influenza

Stay alert for symptoms such as:

- Sudden, unexplained death
- Lethargy or lack of appetite
- Drop in egg production
- Sneezing, coughing, or nasal discharge
- Swelling around the head, comb, or wattles

If you notice any of these signs:

- **Isolate sick birds** immediately
- **Wear gloves** and disinfect your shoes or boots
- **Report suspected cases** to the USDA or your State Veterinarian right away  
 **Call 1-866-536-7593**

## Early Detection Saves Flocks

Early reporting is key to containing the spread of avian influenza. Taking quick action protects not just your birds, but the wider community of poultry owners in your area.

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