

# HPAI and Agritourism

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Shelburne Farms, Shelburne, VT

**T**he 2022 arrival of wildfowl and HPAI has been quite concerning, but almost entirely for birds and not for humans. There is no evidence of the current 2022 variant of the virus infecting people and then being passed to other people. Because transmission to humans is linked with direct exposure to sick birds or contaminated environments, you can consider interaction of visitors with healthy birds to be low risk.

## Keeping Visitors Safe

Maintaining a clean environment and encouraging visitors to practice good hygiene is critical to keeping them safe from a variety of pathogens.

- Always recommend hand washing after handling animals or their environments and before eating, and make handwashing stations available to guests.
- Regularly clean railings, gates, fences, and other places where visitors may come in contact with bird feces.
- Communicate with visitors that if they find a sick or dead bird (wild or domestic), they should not handle it, and should contact the farmer right away.

## Keeping Your Birds Safe

How concerned should you be about people from other places walking onto your farm and potentially tracking contamination from elsewhere? It's best to err on the side of caution.

- Have a designated area for parking that minimizes cross-traffic with farm vehicles.
- Provide protective overshoes for guests to put on before leaving the parking area.
- Consider not allowing visitors to visit if they have their own poultry at home.
- If introducing any new birds into your flock, make sure to quarantine them (14 days) to mitigate risk that they may bring disease into your resident flock.
- Monitor your flock regularly for any signs of sickness. Early detection is key to preventing the spread of any disease.
- If your flock typically forages outdoors in a fenced area or free ranges, consider keeping them inside during periods of high migratory bird activity spring and fall (March-May and September-November).
- Do not share equipment

## Keep in Mind

Most farms that had poultry come down with HPAI had seen waterfowl on their property and in some cases wild birds and farm birds accessed the same pond or waterway. General visitors who don't contact places frequented by waterfowl may pose a low risk. The consequences of an HPAI outbreak on your farm? These include quarantine of the farm, depopulation of the flock through the most humane



method available, disposal of bird carcasses and eggs, and cleaning and disinfection. Learn more about USDA APHIS response goals and processes: [aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/emergency-management/hpai/fadprep-hpai](https://aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/emergency-management/hpai/fadprep-hpai)

## Learn More

- Virus Transmission: [cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/virus-transmission.htm](https://cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/virus-transmission.htm)
- Defend the Flock Program: [aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program/defend-the-flock-program](https://aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program/defend-the-flock-program)
- Biosecurity Measures: [healthyagriculture.org/livestock/poultry/](https://healthyagriculture.org/livestock/poultry/)
- APHIS Biosecurity for Birds: Know the Warning Signs: [youtube.com/watch?v=G3zP72KEKIO](https://youtube.com/watch?v=G3zP72KEKIO)
- <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/emergency-management/hpai/fadprep-hpai>
- Vermont Agritourism [uvm.edu/vtagritourism](https://uvm.edu/vtagritourism)



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