

Poultry diseases

Learning more about disease prevention and management will help you keep your flock healthy! You can make a big difference by watching for signs of disease in your birds and taking action as quickly as possible.

Serious poultry diseases include:

- Avian influenza (AI)
- Infectious laryngotracheitis (ILT)
- Mycoplasma
- Newcastle disease

Not sure what to do?

Get advice from knowledgeable, helpful and trustworthy sources!

These may include:

- A veterinarian
- Alberta Agriculture and Forestry agriculture.alberta.ca/smallflock
- University of Alberta poultry.ualberta.ca
- Other universities' poultry extension websites
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) inspection.gc.ca
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) usda.gov

Visit agriculture.alberta.ca/smallflock for disease facts sheets and information about humane euthanasia, carcass disposal and keeping your small flock healthy.

When Disease Enters Your Flock >



Sick birds? Here's what to do



Signs of sick birds

Watch for changes in your flock

Signs include:

- Reduced activity or movement
- Not eating
- Swelling around the head, neck and eyes
- Coughing, sneezing or gasping
- Tremors or lack of co-ordination
- Decreased egg production
- Gathering near a heat source
- Diarrhea
- Sudden/unexpected death

Some poultry diseases can have a devastating impact, and they must be reported to the province – for monitoring and disease control. If you suspect a reportable disease like ILT, avian influenza or Newcastle disease, contact the Office of Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian at **780-427-3448** (call toll-free in Alberta by dialing **310-0000**).

After hours call **1-800-524-0051**.

What to do when you think your birds are sick

- Call a veterinarian right away
- Separate sick birds from the rest of the flock, and provide separate food and water
- Ensure sick birds have shelter and protection from cold and drafts
- Record what you see. Consider taking pictures or video
- Use dedicated clothing and equipment when caring for sick birds
- Document the care and treatment of your flock



By taking action early, you can:

- More successfully treat birds
- Have fewer deaths
- Prevent spreading disease to other birds or flocks
- Reduce the impact on your flock's production

If birds die or euthanasia is needed

If birds suddenly die:

- Place carcasses in a sealed bag and refrigerate until you have advice from a veterinarian
- Carcasses in a sealed bag may be frozen if there is a delay in testing

If a bird is suffering, there are several accepted methods of humane euthanasia, including:

- Cervical dislocation and lethal injection with an appropriate veterinary drug administered by a veterinarian

Dispose of carcasses properly if they are not needed for testing

- Proper disposal helps to reduce the spread of disease and odour
- Alberta's Disposal of Dead Animals Regulation describes the rules for carcass disposal

