



January 19, 2023

For Immediate Release

Working together to monitor and reduce spread of Avian Influenza in wild birds

The Nunatsiavut Government is working with the provincial Department of Fisheries and Land Resources and Environment and Climate Change Canada to monitor for the presence of the Highly-Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in wild birds.

Wild birds, especially waterfowl, are natural carriers of influenza viruses. They are not always affected by the disease, but can still transmit it to other wild birds and vulnerable domestic birds. On rare occasions, Avian influenza viruses, such as HPAI, can cause disease in humans. Careful cleaning practices (washing hands, clothing, equipment, etc.) reduces the risk of disease and spread of the virus.

As of January 18, 2023, there has been no confirmed cases of HPAI since the last update in May 2022. All sampled birds have tested negative.

People who encounter birds acting strange (or dead) are encouraged to report sightings **directly to their local conservation officer**. Signs that a bird may have HPAI include nervousness, tremors or lack of coordination, swelling around the head, neck and eyes, lack of energy or movement, coughing, gasping for air or sneezing, diarrhea or sudden death. People should not handle dead, sick or birds exhibiting strange behavior. If contact with wild birds is unavoidable, wear gloves or use a doubled plastic bag and avoid contact with the animal's bodily fluids and feces. Wash your hands with soap and warm water.

It's considered safe to hunt, handle, and eat healthy game birds. However, exposure to Avian Influenza can occur when handling wild birds. There is no evidence to suggest that properly cooked game birds are a source of Avian Influenza infection for people. Wear gloves when preparing harvested birds. Thoroughly clean contaminated surfaces on tools, work areas, and clothing. Do not eat, drink, or smoke while handling raw or other game products.

To report a sighting or dead bird, please contact:

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