



September 14, 2023

For immediate release

Working together to monitor, reduce spread of the 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 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. Avian influenza viruses, such as HPAI can, on rare occasions, cause disease in humans. Careful cleaning practices (such as washing hands, clothing, equipment, etc.) reduces the risk of disease and spread of the virus.

As of June 30, 2023, there has been no confirmed cases of HPAI since the last update in May 2022. All sampled birds have tested negative.

The Nunatsiavut Government and partners are continuing to monitor the spread of HPAI. If residents encounter birds acting strangely or dead birds, they 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.

Members of the public 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 wild bird body fluids and feces. Wash your hands with soap and warm water.

It is 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 a dead bird, please contact:

Richard Maggo/Emma-Rose Murphy	Ian Winters	Errol Andersen	Samantha Pilgrim	David Wolfrey	Joseph Townley	Dean McLean
922-2942	933-3337	923-2365	479-9763	947-3383	896-8582	497-8725
Nain	Hopedale	Makkovik	Postville	Rigolet	HV-GB	NWR