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Press Release:

There are no cases of H5N2 influenza in Sauk County at this time. You are probably aware that four outbreaks of H5N2 influenza among domestic poultry have been detected in Wisconsin to date. This follows the occurrence of outbreaks among poultry in Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota, Missouri, and several other states from this same influenza strain.

This strain of bird flu has not been known to cause disease in humans. However, flu viruses can change over time, and it is possible that this virus may develop the ability to infect humans in the future. State and local agencies are working together to prevent the spread of the virus beyond the affected farms.

Poultry owners can take preventative measures now to help stop the spread of the virus. We recommend adding these practices to your routine:

- Restrict access to your property and keep your birds away from other birds.
- Keep a designated pair of shoes to wear around your birds, wash clothing after visiting your birds, and use disinfectants correctly.
- Clean and disinfect cages, poultry equipment and car tires after visiting a farm store, poultry swap, or other location with birds present.
- Keep new birds separate from your flock for 30 days; quarantine returning birds from the rest of your flock after visiting a poultry swap, exhibition or other event.
- Do not share equipment or supplies with others, but if you must, disinfect it first.
- Wash hands before and after bird handling.

Poultry affected by any type of avian influenza can show many symptoms. Some things to watch for in your flock include:

- Decreased food consumption, huddling, depression, closed eyes
- Respiratory signs, such as coughing and sneezing
- Decreased egg production, watery greenish diarrhea, excessive thirst
- Swollen wattles and combs
- Sudden death

The avian influenza strain currently detected in the United States causes no apparent human health concerns. No one in the U.S. has become ill from this strain. It is safe to eat properly prepared poultry products, including meat and eggs. More information can be found on the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection website at http://datcp.wi.gov/Animals/Animal_Diseases/Avian_Influenza/index.aspx

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