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**GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF ANIMAL HEALTH**  
Mexico-United States Commission for Prevention of Foot-and-Mouth Disease  
and other Animal Exotic Diseases

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## **HIGH PATHOGENICITY AVIAN INFLUENZA**

Avian influenza, also known as “avian flu” is a highly contagious viral disease that affects farmyard poultry such as turkeys, roosters, hens, chickens and quails, among others; it is characterized for causing a purple or purplish coloring in the crest and chin of infected birds.

### **What is its geographical distribution?**

This disease is located in some American, European, Asian and African countries.

### **Who or what causes it?**

It is caused by an *Influenzavirus A* genus virus of the Orthomyxoviridae family.

### **How is the virus transmitted?**

The virus is found in secretions and excreta of infected birds (exhalations, saliva, nasal fluids and feces.) It can be transmitted by direct contact or by fomites, like individuals, vehicles, materials or equipment and even by mechanical vectors such as flies.

### **What are the clinical signs?**

The birds have fever, depression, loss of appetite, sneezing, blood-stained nasal discharge, and diarrhea, purple or purplish colored inflammation of crest and chin, raised plumage, trembling, weakness, loss of coordination and huddling; there is a decrease in egg production, and laid eggs are decolorated, soft, deform and have aqueous albumin.

The sudden death of all the flock is common, with or without clinical signs.

### **How is the disease diagnosed?**

It is difficult to clinically distinguish avian influenza from velogenic Newcastle Disease, infectious bronchitis, laryngotracheitis, avian cholera, infectious coryza, colibacillosis and egg drop syndrome, since the signs are similar; therefore, it is necessary to diagnose in an official laboratory.

### **How can it be prevented?**

It is necessary to control the movement of birds and their products and byproducts, and bolster biosafety measures in Avian Production Units (APU), for example:

- Establish sanitary protocols for all individuals entering the APU.
- Wash and disinfect all vehicles entering the APU.

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- Use sanitary mats at the main entrance and each and every section.
- Check the flock daily to detect birds with suggestive clinical signs.
- Do not move diseased or dead birds outside the APU. Those animals must be isolated or disposed of in sanitary conditions, as the case may be.
- Subject excreta to a thermal treatment process higher than 56°C degrees.
- Periodically wash and disinfect facilities, materials and equipment.
- Consider establishing a sanitary vacuum period between each productive cycle.
- Implement procedures to control wildlife and eliminate noxious fauna.

SENASICA carries out a permanent epidemiological surveillance aimed to timely detect animal diseases endangering livestock assets and the public health of our country.

Report immediately to the official veterinarian services about any suspicious case; an official veterinarian will visit the production unit, obtain the samples for laboratory diagnosis and give the appropriate instructions.

Contact us for more information or to report any suspicious cases:

Emergency phone: 01 (800) 751 2100  
(24 hours/day - 365 days/year)

Phone: 01 (55) 5905 1000  
(Extensions 51236, 51242 and 51243)

E-mail addresses:  
sive.dgsa@senasica.gob.mx  
gestioncpa.dgsa@senasica.gob.mx

You can also report at any SADER or SENASICA offices, or at the Regional Coordination Offices of the CPA closest to your community.