



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Karen Ross, Secretary

September 16, 2015

To: Poultry Producers in California

As we enter another winter “avian flu” season, please continue to invest in several key areas in order to protect your flocks, your business, and the California economy. For example, continue to:

1. **Review and enhance the biosecurity at your ranch:** The goal is to keep influenza away from your flocks, or if an unfortunate introduction occurs, keep it from spreading between flocks. Practice optimal “perimeter” and “house” biosecurity.
2. **Keep your poultry separated from wilds birds:** If you can move your birds entirely indoors, do so, from now until July 2016. Organic certifiers that are not aware of the current threat to the health of our domestic flocks from wild birds can be referred to my office for more information and further explanation.
3. **Minimize traffic onto your farm and particularly into your houses:** That includes enforcing your visitor policies and discussing the possibility of off-site “paper audits” (records, pictures, date stamped videos, etc.) with inspectors, particularly those already familiar with your ranch.

Hopefully, after this winter we will have a better picture of the current threat of introduction. Regardless, we now know that highly pathogenic avian influenza can travel here with migrating birds, can infect resident wild birds and can spill over into our commercial flocks. That knowledge and the costs associated with an outbreak to your business will hopefully stimulate permanent change when it comes to biosecurity.

Sincerely,

Annette Jones, D.V.M.
State Veterinarian and Director

