

# Avian Influenza

## What is Avian Influenza?

Avian influenza (AI), also known as bird flu, is a viral infection of domestic poultry and other wild birds, such as migrating waterfowl. Poultry includes chickens, ducks, turkeys, geese, pigeon (bred for meat), partridge, quail, guinea fowl and pheasants.

There are two strains of the virus; Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza and Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza. Low pathogenic AI typically causes respiratory signs, whereas, highly pathogenic strains can cause multiple organ failure and sudden, high mortality of birds.

## What are the clinical signs of AI?

Increased mortality, unusual behavior, breathing difficulties, neurological signs such as shaking or incoordination, decreased eating/drinking, decreased egg production, thin or misshapen egg shells.

Avian Influenza is a notifiable animal disease, if you suspect any signs of AI in poultry or wild birds, you must contact the States Veterinary Officers (email: [svo@gov.gg](mailto:svo@gov.gg), tel: 01481 711161).

## How is it spread?

The virus is transmitted between individual birds by eating or drinking contaminated feed/water or inhalation of the virus. It can also be spread due to introduction of diseased birds to the flock or poor biosecurity of poultry keepers, such as a lack of cleaning and disinfection and poor pest control.

## How can I keep my poultry safe?

### Register with Farm Services

- Email [svo@gov.gg](mailto:svo@gov.gg) or call the farm services answerphone on (01481) 235740 and provide the following information:
  - Name,
  - Address,
  - Contact details (phone number, email address),
  - Type of birds kept,



- Number of birds kept,
- Address where poultry are located, if different to the home address.
- The Office *for the* Environment and Infrastructure will use this information to contact you if there is a disease outbreak or if there are any other animal health/welfare concerns that you should be made aware of.
  - For details on how we will use your data please see our [Fair Processing Notice](#)

Good biosecurity and housing measures to keep your poultry safe:

- **Keep them housed** – if you do not have a purpose built building you could use a garden shed, garage or polytunnel (provided there is adequate light and ventilation).
- **Block up any gaps** in poultry housing with boards or netting to avoid any wild birds getting in.
- If it is not possible to house birds, you must **separate them from wild birds** in a netted enclosure and ensure that food and water is kept indoors.
- Keep chickens and turkeys **housed separately** from ducks, geese and game birds.
- Make your premises **unattractive to wild birds** using scarers, foils or streamers.
- **Store food and bedding inside** to reduce the risk of contamination.
- **Clean and disinfect** – footwear, hard surfaces, equipment and vehicles.
- Ensure **pest control** is effective.

Further biosecurity guidance can be found on the gov.gg website under All Services > Family & Pets > Pets > Animal Health > [Bird Flu Biosecurity Guidance 2020](#)