



AMERICAN RACING PIGEON UNION, INC.

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Member - Federation
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Avian Influenza Update

The AU has been monitoring the status of Avian Influenza (AI) detected in a few states. We have been sending out electronic updates to those signed up to receive them. If you would like to be placed on this list to receive alerts and monthly updates, please go to <http://www.pigeon.org/contactus.php>.

Set forth below is an update on each state where AI has been detected. The situation in each state changes often. We encourage members to check the state links listed below regularly. If you are not in one of these states, it is good to monitor your own state Department of Agriculture for related news.

As you will see, the AU is reaching out to key officials in all of these states emphasizing that the racing pigeon community is supportive of sound, science-based measures and is staying educated on the outbreak and acting responsibly. The AU has been explaining that racing pigeons are not known to be susceptible to AI nor to shedding the virus. We urge the officials to consider the status of racing pigeons separate from that of poultry, which has a high susceptibility to AI.

This is also a good time to remind members of the AU's biosecurity measures provided many years ago. These were written by former AU Executive Vice President, Tommy Erskine, and AU NW Zone Director, Dr. Gary Braden. The protocol found at <http://pigeon.org/biosecurity.htm> reiterates the importance of basic cleanliness and proper loft management.

We have been asked about transporting birds whether in or out of the affected areas. It is a good idea to have a list of the birds (easily generated through WinSpeed©) on the transporter, as well as a loft certification inspection sheet (<http://pigeon.org/loftcertificationpolicy.htm>). If you have not had your loft certified, this is a good time to implement the program within your club. This proves self-regulation and that our members offer optimum care for their birds.

Another good document to have on the transporter is the AU brochure, *Pigeons and Avian Related Diseases* (<http://pigeon.org/pdf/brochure%20-%20hystoplasmosis.pdf>).

All of these documents will better prepare your hauler/liberator when moving birds for training or racing. **Please note, in a quarantine area no movement is allowed.** Again, we encourage members to monitor the sites below for updates.

Officers

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Washington

The AU has been in contact with officials within the Washington Department of Agriculture Avian Health Program to discuss the recent testing. They advise the virus continues to evolve and they are cautious of all avian species.

At this time, they advise there is only one county under quarantine (Clallam County). The quarantine in Benton and Franklin Counties has been lifted.

The Washington State Department of Agriculture has discretion to quarantine or lift quarantine as they deem appropriate. They can't predict with 100% certainty how long the quarantine will remain in effect. This is all subject to change based on their efforts in the near future.

They have found H5N8, HPN2 AND HPN1 in waterfowl and domestic poultry in three areas.

State officials indicate there is to be no movement within the area, nor will they allow birds to be shipped out of the quarantine areas. If birds are shipped into the area, they will immediately go into quarantine.

Washington State Department of Agriculture
<http://agr.wa.gov/>

Idaho

The AU office also spoke with Dr. Barton with the Idaho Department of Agriculture. They have detected H5N2 at two locations. One is that of a falconer. The second was in a backyard poultry flock.

They implemented the control zone to mitigate the spread of the virus. Idaho has a very large poultry industry so they follow International trade agreements. Trade agreements mandate a 10 kilometer zone around an affected facility. They are currently requesting voluntary testing of seemingly healthy birds and require testing of sick birds.

While they agree pigeons are not necessarily susceptible, they are also being cautious as strains can mutate. In order to remain in compliance with their own quarantine guidelines, they will not allow movement of pigeons at this time either. No shipping in or out of the quarantine zone is allowed. The zone encompasses Parma, ID. They are not able to advise of duration of the quarantine at this time.

Idaho State Department of Agriculture
<http://www.agri.idaho.gov/>

Utah

H5N8 was detected in a wild bird in Davis County and a surveillance plan has been put in place to monitor the situation. No areas are under quarantine at this time.

Utah State Department of Agriculture

<http://ag.utah.gov/>

California

H5N8 was detected in a commercial turkey flock in Stanislaus County California. The CA Department of Agriculture will continue evaluating. At this time, there is no quarantine in effect.

Oregon

After detecting H5N8 in Douglas County Oregon in December 2014, the state of Oregon continues to observe findings in the state. There have been no new positives and there is no quarantine in effect.

Oregon State Department of Agriculture

<http://odanews.wpengine.com/update-douglas-county-avian-influenza-response-continues/>

Information for back yard biosecurity <http://healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov/>