

AMERICAN RACING PIGEON UNION, INC.

P.O. BOX 18465 OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73154-0465 PH: 405-848-5801 FAX: 405-848-5888



January 10, 2017

Avian Influenza & Outbreak Update ***Most recent news . . .***

AU members have recently forwarded information circulated on the internet regarding an outbreak that has been affecting fancy pigeons. It has been speculated that when the birds were co-mingled at a recent show, a virus spread and birds have died.

Please be assured that the AU alerts members to issues such as this as soon as facts are verified, so as not to create a false panic.

We continue to research this mystery outbreak and will make information available as quickly as we receive and verify. Please continue to forward any information you receive in order that we may continue investigation.

Below is information regarding this new outbreak, which was recently received from Sigels Pigeon Supply:

Fellow fanciers,

Within the past few weeks we have been fielding an unusually large number of questions regarding very sick and dying birds in lofts around the USA mostly, but not exclusively, in the northeastern part of the US from New England all the way to Minnesota, and as far south as Tennessee. Almost all of those reporting the sick birds are show fanciers who have just returned from shows. By coincidence, there is also an outbreak of bird flu in Europe, and Reo Virus in Australia. There are some who are asking if this is more than a coincidence, and if it is possible that there could be a correlation.

I have had a recent discussion with Dr. Raf Herbots in Belgium regarding the bird flu in Europe, and he has basically told me that while, yes, there is an outbreak, it is only in ducks, geese and turkeys, not in pigeons, and that pigeons are not inclined to get this disease, nor do they host it. So, while the authorities in Europe have had to temporarily stop pigeon transport or racing, as Raf has said, "This is not new for us. We have had to deal with this before. I am confident that once the temperatures in Europe start to go up, things will go back to normal." Keep in mind that this type of bird flu is a cold weather virus. So, as far as the European outbreak of bird flu is concerned, that does not appear to have any correlation with what has been happening recently to the aforementioned show birds.

As to the Reo virus outbreak in Australia, I have been in contact with Dr. Colin Walker regarding

this and am awaiting his response. On a personal note, I feel confident that as it regards the problems that our fellow fanciers have been experiencing in the northeastern part of the country, the Reo virus has no connection. What I think is going on is exactly the same thing that the racing fanciers around the USA have been dealing with for some time now and which we have had some excellent seminars about just recently in the USA from European speakers Dr. Raf Herbots and PHD Pharmacologist Jean Louis Jorrissen, and it is the following: Circo virus is present now, and can be isolated in almost every pigeon, not only in Europe but also in America. Circo, once awakened by stress, starts a domino effect in which Adeno virus and Herpes virus often become players. Also, it is a known fact that these viruses "almost never travel alone." For simplicity sake, we can look at it in this way, the viruses are a vehicle with empty seats in the back, and bacteria almost always come along for the ride. The bacteria most often associated with the Adeno virus is E.Coli, but Salmonella and other bacteria, including those that cause bad respiratory infections, have also been found associated with these viruses. Another way to look at it is that the virus becomes the primary infection that opens the door for the bacteria to enter. Some researchers have also found that in almost every case canker is also present.

The consensus among all of the veterinarians and pharmacologists that I am associated with and who are primarily involved in pigeon health is that we should all be vaccinating our birds as often as possible, up to 5 or 6 times per year. We should vaccinate for PMV, Herpes, pox and salmonella. There are vaccines available for those diseases. I have also gotten educated about how to properly use LaSota vaccine on pigeons, and even though LaSota is a chicken vaccine for Newcastle disease, it does give our pigeons an immunity bump, especially if those pigeons have already been vaccinated for PMV. Strong immune systems are what help most to ward off these diseases, and any time you vaccinate your birds you are helping the immune system get stronger.

There is also good news to report on the PMV vaccine situation in the USA. It now appears that there has finally been approval of a new PMV vaccine that will be produced by the same team that is producing our KM-1 salmonella vaccine right now. That is certainly good news, as we desperately need a PMV vaccine here in the States.

Hopefully this info will be of some help. As soon as I hear anything from Dr. Walker, I will post that as well.

Hang in there guys. There's light at the end of the tunnel.

All the best,
Ed

[Avian Influenza](#)

Former AU Vice President and Lifetime member, Tommy Erskine, has recently brought it to our attention that there has been a detection of H5N2 (Avian Influenza) in Montana in a wild mallard.

For more information, go to:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/newsroom/news>

Once again, we thank our members for providing information!

As always, we stress utilizing strict bio-security in your loft and avoid co-mingling of birds with your homers.

AU Bio-Security Recommendations

Basic bio-security measures should always be used. It is more important than ever to make sure you are cleaning your loft regularly, washing hands going in and out of the loft, monitoring or perhaps restricting others from going in and out of your loft and placing new birds in a quarantine section before integrating them with your other birds.

AU Bio-Security Recommendations are found at:

<http://www.pigeon.org/loftcertificationpolicy.htm>

Other Ways You Can Help

The AU also developed the Loft Certification Program many years ago. We have encouraged members to participate in this self-regulating program to illustrate optimum care is provided the birds. It is achieved through a point system and is based on practicing basic bio-security. The [AU Loft Certification Program](#) doesn't cost anything. For more information, please feel free to call the national office (800-755-2778).

For updates from the USDA, go to:

<http://www.rma.usda.gov/other/stateag.html>

For updates from the State Veterinarians, go to:

<http://www.usaha.org/Portals/6/StateAnimalHealthOfficials.pdf>