

AMERICAN RACING PIGEON UNION, INC.

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Avian Influenza Update – June 4, 2015

As the Avian Influenza has spread into the Mississippi Flyway, several states have been severely affected. As of June 4, 2015, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska, Ohio and West Virginia have banned bird shows, exhibits, swap meets, transporting birds, etc. Several of the states listed above have not detected the virus, but are taking this measure as a precaution to protect their poultry industry. Birds that are part of these events are co-mingled with other birds and that is when potential for spread of the virus is highest.

The AU encourages members to continue to monitor their state department of agriculture and vet websites to determine what, if any, restrictions are in place in their particular state. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us for clarification.

Though we argue that pigeons are not poultry and that they have historically not been susceptible to AI, the various state veterinarians still include any birds that are co-mingled due to the precedent of the virus and the way the virus is behaving. The virus is incredibly powerful.

We will continue to petition state officials to ease the restrictions that now impact pigeon fanciers and will post updates on progress.

We would like to thank the AU members that have been diligent about forwarding updates as changes occur frequently.

The link for the United States Department of Agriculture is:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome>

To find your state websites, go to:

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

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

This is important! If you are aware of someone in the affected areas, please share this message.

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.

Several years ago, former board members, Tommy Erskine and Dr. Gary Braden, developed bio-security measures for AU members to follow. Subsequently, this document was reviewed by the USDA. The USDA indicated the bio-security measures presented were a great model for AU members to follow.

AU Bio-Security Recommendations are found at <http://pigeon.org/biosecurity.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 (<http://www.pigeon.org/loftcertificationpolicy.htm>) doesn't cost anything. For more information, please feel free to call the national office (800-755-2778).