

AMERICAN RACING PIGEON UNION, INC.

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



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Virulent Newcastle Disease (VND) Update

The last positive VND case was detected on January 7, 2020, now more than a month ago. While this is encouraging, there is still concern that illegal movement of birds might result in prolonged restrictions.

The AU held discussions with the California State Veterinarian's office on February 11, 2020. Members have expressed concern over the legitimacy of pigeons' susceptibility to VND. We specifically asked about this given the extended period of time that the quarantines and movement restrictions have been in place. It would seem there would have been many, many pigeons found dead if susceptible.

The response provided was that while it may appear pigeons do not show clinical signs of having the virus, they could carry the virus to other species that are vulnerable, specifically poultry.

If no further positives are detected in the next month or so, the freedom of disease phase will begin and tests will be conducted to determine eradication. If no further outbreaks, the quarantines will then be lifted. The state vet's Public Information Office indicates it is possible quarantines would be lifted (if no further positives detected) in May.

For additional information or to view a map of the quarantine area, go to:
https://www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/animal_health/newcastle_disease_info.html

The California Department of Food & Agriculture is still recommending that gatherings where birds (including but not limited to poultry) are brought together for shows, auctions, swap meets, pet marts, fair exhibits, pigeon races, and petting zoos be suspended.

We encourage members to adhere to the recommendations to avoid potentially spreading the virus or putting your birds in jeopardy.

Please do not attempt to ship birds from within quarantine areas.

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>