MilloGram

WENGER® FEEDS

OUR MISSION: Providing Quality Feed for Quality Food.

A SPECIAL MILLOGRAM EDITION

Operating in a Market with Heightened HPAI Risks

Phil Rohrbaugh, Vice Chairman and CEO

There is no question that the world we all are operating in today is far from normal—a global pandemic, rapidly rising inflation, and energy costs, and a war that will impact supply chains. Now we have another major issue to think about, and that is a greater risk that highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) could impact the Pennsylvania market, where there is a concentration of poultry operations. That higher threat level is due to HPAI being found in commercial operations in neighboring states. This special edition is to talk about the industry's readiness to mitigate this increased risk and our heightened focus on biosecurity in the feed production segment of The Wenger Group (TWG).

There is a need for everyone to increase their focus on biosecurity and we are doing that across all of our business segments—animal nutrition production (Wenger Feeds), grain and fertilizer operations (Risser Grain), and in our pullet growing services and specialty egg production operations (Dutchland Farms). In all of these businesses we are asking ourselves how we ensure that 1) we have clean and disinfected equipment as we enter and exit farms; 2) our products or services are not a vector for transmission; and, 3) we have as limited contact with all poultry operations as possible, in terms of foot traffic at the farms. This edition of the Millogram is focused on only one of our TWG segments, which is the one with the highest degree of widespread contact with poultry operations on a daily basis.

While we have provided certain information in this edition that we believe will be helpful to our customers in understanding measures to take to increase defenses against the threat of this disease, there is much more information we can share on this topic. Accordingly, should you have any biosecurity questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to the executives mentioned in this newsletter, your relationship manager, or any of our executive team.

Phil Rohrbaugh, CEO

Wenger Feeds HPAI Response Action

As you are likely aware, on February 23, the USDA confirmed that highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) was found in a commercial poultry farm in our service region. We understand the severity of this finding and are very concerned for not only that producer, but all poultry in our trade area. While we maintain high levels of biosecurity at all times, we have enhanced our procedures in response to this threat with the following measures:

- If we are the feed supplier to an infected farm, we will immediately activate our Red Alert disinfect procedure, which includes the following steps:
  - Using disposable boots and coveralls for each delivery that are left on the farm
  - Disinfecting the soles of shoes, floor mat, and pedals of the truck
  - Not allowing any flies inside the cab and disinfecting any tools used on the farm
  - Completely disinfecting the truck prior to leaving the farm property using our onboard disinfecting system to spray down the entire tractor and trailer.
  - If at all possible, not allowing the driver to exit the cab of the truck during the feed unloading process by utilizing our remote boom controls & camera systems.
- Prohibiting all feed truck movement from the Massey, MD feed mill that services areas in the current outbreak region to our PA facilities.
- Using disposable boots for all other feed deliveries until further notice. All farms will now need an on-site waste container as drivers will be leaving the boots on the farm. Please secure the container so it doesn't blow away.
- Moving Dutchland Farms flock service visits to virtual wherever possible to limit travel to poultry farms.
- Communicating regularly with our sales team, flock service team, and external communication outlets like the PA Department of Agriculture and PennAg.
- Increasing our stock of PPE and disinfectant to accommodate an increased use of these supplies.
- Enhanced education to our customers, team members, and communities in which we operate through direct communication channels as well as highlighting HPAI and Biosecurity through our newsletters, social media, and websites.

While we cannot predict or prevent wild bird migration overhead, we are committed to doing everything in our operation to prevent the spread of this terrible disease.

This issue contains information on HPAI and biosecurity. We are also building a repository of updated information at our website, wengerfeeds.com. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Sincerely,

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WHAT IS AVIAN INFLUENZA

Avian influenza refers to infection of birds with avian influenza Type A viruses. These viruses occur naturally among wild aquatic birds worldwide and can infect domestic poultry and other bird and animal species. Wild aquatic birds can be infected with avian influenza A viruses in their intestines and respiratory tract but usually do not get sick. However, avian influenza A viruses are very contagious among birds and some of these viruses can sicken and even kill certain domesticated bird species including chickens, ducks, and turkeys.

Infected birds can shed avian influenza A viruses in their saliva, nasal secretions, and feces. Susceptible birds become infected when they have contact with the virus as it is shed by infected birds. They also can become infected through contact with surfaces that are contaminated with the virus from infected birds.

Avian influenza A viruses are classified into the following two categories: low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI) A viruses, and highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) A viruses. The categories refer to molecular characteristics of a virus and the virus' ability to cause disease and mortality in chickens in a laboratory setting. Infection of poultry with LPAI viruses may cause no disease or mild illness (such as ruffled feathers and a drop in egg production) and may not be detected. Infection of poultry with HPAI viruses can cause severe disease with high mortality. Both HPAI and LPAI viruses can spread rapidly through poultry flocks. However, some ducks can be infected without any signs of illness.

Please note, infectious material can travel on just a small piece of manure.

When H5 or H7 avian influenza outbreaks occur in poultry, depopulation of infected flocks is usually carried out. In addition, surveillance of flocks that are nearby or linked to the infected flock(s), and quarantine of exposed flocks with culling if disease is detected are the preferred control and eradication methods.

SIGNS OF BIRD FLU:

- Sudden death without any clinical signs
- Runny nose, coughing, sneezing
- Swelling of the head, eyelids, comb, wattles, and hocks
- Purple discoloration of the wattles, combs, and legs
- Stumbling or falling down
- Lack of energy and appetite
- Decreased egg production and/or soft-shelled or misshapen eggs
- Diarrhea

Report serious or unusual animal health problems to your service person, veterinarian, local extension office, animal owner, or State or Federal Animal Health officials. USDA operates a toll-free hotline (1-866-536-7593) with veterinarians to help you.

Figure 1: Chicken affected with avian influenza showing typical cyanosis of comb and wattles, and conjunctivitis. Photo credit: USDA Plum Island Animal Disease Center. Figure 2: Hemorrhages on legs and feet. Photo credit: USDA Plum Island Animal Disease Center.

REMAIN VIGILANT: BIOSECURITY TIPS

The winter season is a time for producers to be especially cognizant about their biosecurity procedures as some viruses—including the HPAI virus—survive best in cold temperatures.

COMMON SENSE BIOSECURITY MEASURES

1. Keep Your Distance. Restrict access to your property and your animals and post a biosecurity sign. Have a specific area where visitors can enter. Visitors should not be allowed near your animals unless necessary, and then visitors should be wearing clean footwear (disposable boot covers work well) and clothes (supply for them). An area should be available for visitors to change clothes and provide shower-in, shower-out facilities if possible. Require and teach biosecurity to family, employees, and all visitors coming into, or involved with your production area.

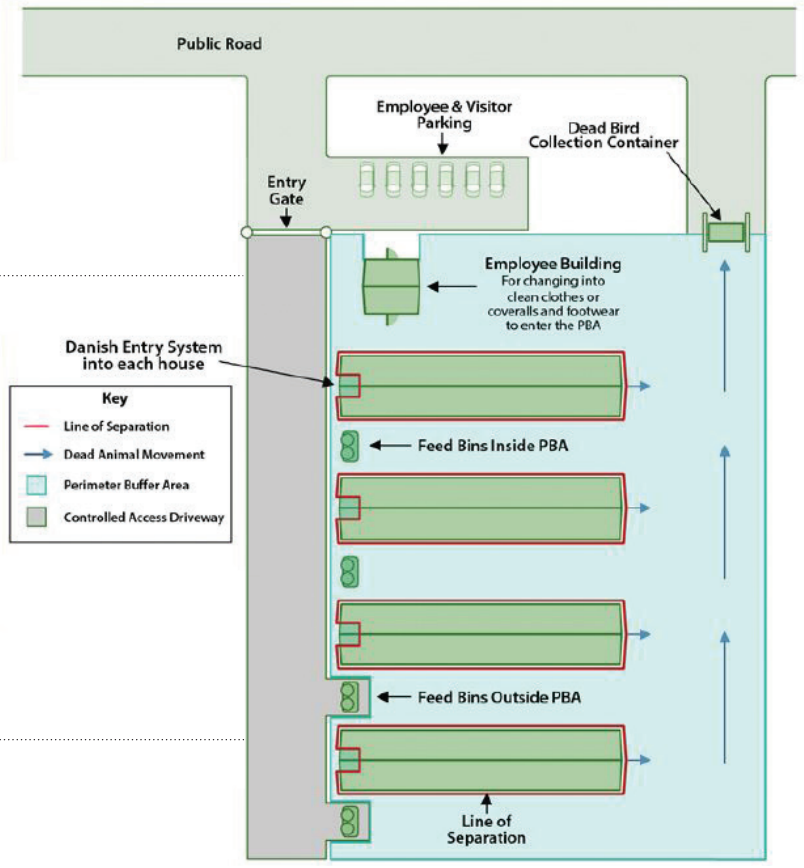
2. Keep It Clean. You, your staff, and family should always follow biosecurity procedures for cleanliness. Wear clean clothes, scrub boots/shoes with disinfectant or use separate, dedicated footwear for inside contact with animals, and wash hands thoroughly. Equipment and vehicles should be kept clean, and insist all equipment and vehicles be cleaned before entering your property. Maintain programs to control birds, rodents, and flies that can carry and spread disease.

3. Don't Haul Disease Home. If you, your employees, or family have been on other farms, other places where there is livestock and/or poultry, or someplace where fellow farm personnel congregate, clean and disinfect your vehicle tires and equipment before returning home. Always change clothes and wash hands before returning to your animals.

4. Don't Borrow Disease from Your Neighbor. Do not share equipment, tools, or other supplies with your neighbors or other livestock or poultry owners. If sharing equipment, be sure to clean and disinfect before returning to your property.

5. Look for Signs of Infectious Diseases. Know what diseases are of concern for your flock or herd and be on the lookout for symptoms. Assess the health of your flock or herd daily. Early detection is important to prevent the spread of disease.

6. Report Sick Animals - Don't Wait. Report serious or unusual animal health problems to your service person, veterinarian, local extension office, animal owner, or State or Federal Animal Health officials. USDA operates a toll-free hotline (1-866-536-7593) with veterinarians to help you.



KEEP THE INSIDE IN AND THE OUTSIDE OUT

This example site demonstrates the concepts of the Perimeter Buffer Area (PBA) and Line of Separation (LOS). In this example, access to the site is restricted by an entry gate leading to a controlled access driveway; employee and visitor parking remains outside the gate. The PBA surrounds the employee building and poultry houses, and allows for one-way movement of dead birds to a dead bird collection container straddling the PBA. Personnel enter the PBA through the Employee Building where they change into clean clothes or coveralls and footwear. The walls of each poultry house function as the LOS, with Danish Entry Systems as the Biosecure Entry Procedure to access the poultry areas.

Source: Center for Food Security and Public Health, Iowa State University

These checklists are a general guide to practicing good biosecurity, but if you have a site-specific biosecurity plan, please follow it. Commercial growers should be sure their site-specific plans follow the National Poultry Improvement Plan biosecurity principles. Source: USDA Defend the Flock

EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES

Clean equipment and vehicles with soap and water before and after they come in contact with your flock. Be sure to spray the tires and undercarriage of vehicles, where contact with infectious agents is most likely. Viruses can survive months—or even years—in small spaces that are hard to clean.

Do not share tools, poultry supplies, or lawn and garden equipment with other flock owners or neighbors. If you must, be sure to clean and disinfect the items before they reach your property and before returning them.

Establish procedures for cleaning and disinfecting equipment and vehicles. Don't be afraid to change these procedures if you see a problem or if something's just not effective or practical. There's always room for improvement.

Give clear and consistent instructions to everyone who handles your equipment or vehicles.

Define paths where trucks, vehicles, and other equipment can travel to access your poultry area. This will help limit the spread of germs and disease.

Know the warning signs of poultry disease, like changes in how much your birds eat or drink, increased deaths in your flock, or general malaise.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING POULTRY ENCLOSURES

Wear personal protective equipment or clothing and shoes that you only use when caring for your poultry. This includes boot covers or boots that can be disinfected. Change into fresh protective gear between poultry houses or coops.

Enclosures must be empty for a thorough cleaning. If you have a poultry house, wait until the house is empty to start the cleaning process. If you have a coop or other type of enclosure, move the birds to a separate area before cleaning.

Remove all litter, manure, and other debris.

"Dry" clean all areas—brush, scrape, and shovel off manure, feathers, and other materials. Disinfectant will not penetrate organic matter or caked-on dirt.

"Wet" clean all surfaces—scrub with water and detergent. Work from top to bottom and back to front.

Rinse all surfaces carefully with water.

Apply disinfectant according to the directions on the label. Be sure to use a disinfectant that is registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and indicates that it is effective against avian influenza and other poultry diseases.

Leave the enclosure empty until it is completely dry. Use fans and/or open doors and windows to help speed the drying process. Wet surfaces can be harmful to poultry.

When you're done, remove and discard your protective gear. If using dedicated clothing and boots, change clothing and clean and disinfect your boots.

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water. Wash and dry your dedicated clothing.

BIOSECURITY AT WENGER'S

In the context of animal agriculture, biosecurity is a series of management steps and practices implemented to prevent the introduction of infectious agents into a herd or flock, the spread of these agents through the herd, and out of the herd to other herds or flocks.

Each farm we deliver to has a biosecurity plan to prevent infectious agents from entering their farm. As we deliver products to customer farms, we also carefully consider biosecurity both at our mills and when we deliver.

WHY IS BIOSECURITY IMPORTANT?

Biosecurity is important for several reasons. First, it is an essential aspect of on-farm food safety programs. Keeping food products wholesome and of highest quality is important for the health and well-being of consumers. This helps to ensure consumer demand for product, and, therefore, ultimately the profitability of animal agriculture enterprises. Secondly, biosecurity should help keep animals healthy and more productive. This benefits the farming community through greater efficiency and profitability as well as the animals through experiencing less disease. Finally, a vibrant agricultural community is a positive influence on the economy of our state and nation and an important resource in maintaining a healthy environment.

BIOSECURITY AT THE WENGER GROUP

Biosecurity is a critical component of livestock production, and at The Wenger Group, we are a key part of the food chain. Our biosecurity processes are covered by several procedures in our quality and management system, which we refer to as The Wenger System.

A key part of this process is restricting visitors to the mill. Doors are locked and frequent visitors, like vendors, are not permitted in the mill. In the event a tour is permitted, all visitors have to sign the visitor log and an affidavit indicating that they have not been on a farm or been in a quarantine zone within the past 7 days as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Anyone entering a mill must use the disinfect sprayer to disinfect the bottom of their shoes.

Our procedures also restrict team members from keeping backyard flocks or house pet birds.

Delivery biosecurity is covered by procedures and applies to all WFM Transport deliveries to and from Wenger Feeds customers' farms. Each truck contains a disinfecting unit that sprays the wheels upon entering and when exiting the farm.

The truck disinfect system is manufactured locally, and members of the Company's transportation team worked directly with this vendor to modify and enhance the system on our fleet.

Drivers spray the bottom of their boots before and after delivery. At the end of the delivery, the driver disinfects the floor mat and pedals with disinfectant.

Wenger's customers have been informed that they must contact the Company in the event of a disease outbreak at their farm. Additional biosecurity procedures can be assessed depending on the disease severity.

Some customers may also require additional levels of biosecurity during delivery. Those customer specific procedures are also housed in The Wenger System.

Each truck contains a disinfecting unit that sprays the wheels upon entering and when exiting the farm. Anyone entering a mill must use the disinfect sprayer to disinfect the bottom of their shoes.

Biosecurity Plan Required for Indemnity

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service issued a final rule in 2018 outlining the conditions under which the USDA will pay indemnity to farms affected by highly pathogenic avian influenza (HIPA).

The final rule does three things:

1. Allows indemnity payments to be split between poultry and egg owners and their contracted growers and provides a formula for the split;
2. Adopts biosecurity principles established by the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP); and
3. Requires auditable biosecurity plans to be in place for larger-sized operations to receive indemnity payments.

The split payments for HPAI in the final rule are in line with the split payments for indemnity in the existing low pathogenic avian influenza program.

Growers that have birds or eggs destroyed due to HPAI may qualify for indemnity payments.

USDA APHIS will pay indemnity to growers and contractors based on the contract terms determined by the two parties.

USDA requires audits to ensure optimal biosecurity is practiced by large poultry facilities.

In the final rule, a facility that meets the minimum size requirements must have an auditable biosecurity plan. To be eligible for HPAI indemnity, the plan must address all 14 biosecurity principles in compliance with National Poultry Improvement Plan requirements.

The 14 points cover: biosecurity responsibility, training, line of separation, perimeter buffer area, personnel, wild birds, rodents, and insects, equipment and vehicles, mortality disposal, manure and litter management, replacement poultry, water supplies, feed and replacement litter, reporting elevated mortality and morbidity, and auditing. To help producers meet the biosecurity standards, USDA APHIS created the Information Manual for Implementing Poultry Biosecurity.

If you raise more than 75,000 layers a year, 100,000 broilers, 30,000 turkeys, or 25,000 waterfowl, upland game birds, or birds raised for release, you are required to follow the guidelines of the NPIP in order to be eligible for indemnity.

Farms with less than this threshold are still eligible for indemnity but are not required to follow the guidelines of NPIP at this time. However, it is good management to have a plan in place. Smaller producers may require a permit to move birds or eggs if their farm were to fall within a quarantine zone of a positive farm. Having a biosecurity plan in place largely reduces the amount of time needed to review plans in order for a permit to be received.

The final rule can be viewed on the Federal Register. Additional biosecurity resources are also available at www.poultrybiosecurity.org.

https://poultrybiosecurity.org/files/Poultry-Biosecurity-Info-Manual.pdf

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Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Found in the Northeast

Avian influenza (AI) is a virus that infects domestic poultry, such as chickens, turkeys, quail, and geese, and wild birds such as shorebirds and waterfowl. AI viruses are divided into two groups—highly pathogenic (HPAI) and low pathogenic (LPAI)—based on the ability of the virus to produce disease and the severity of the disease.

HPAI can strike quickly and spread rapidly without warning. To learn more about our response and how to protect your birds, see this special issue.

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