



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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MDARD's State Veterinarian Stops Bird Movement to Protect Health of Michigan Poultry

Due to the potential for highly pathogenic avian influenza, 2015 poultry exhibitions are canceled throughout the state

Lansing – Today, after much deliberation and consideration with the Michigan Association for Fairs and Exhibitions (MAFE), Michigan 4-H leadership and the Michigan Allied Poultry Industry, the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's State Veterinarian Dr. James Averill made the difficult decision to cancel all 2015 poultry and waterfowl exhibitions in Michigan to prevent the comingling of birds from different locations. This includes, but is not limited to shows, exhibitions, swap meets, petting zoos at fairs, game bird and waterfowl fair displays, and Miracle of Life exhibits.

"We know the tremendous amount of time, money and passion the kids and other exhibitors invest into their birds and the importance of having livestock animals at these events to interact with the public," said Averill. "The rapid spread of these avian flu viruses is historic and has impacted more than a dozen states across the U.S. While there are currently no known cases of HPAI in Michigan, commitment to protecting the health of all of the state's poultry flocks - backyard and commercial farmers – led us to making this difficult decision."

MDARD has been working in conjunction with the Michigan Association of Fairs and Exhibitions, Michigan State University Extension, 4-H programs, and other partners to identify ways to engage Michigan's youth poultry exhibitors and allow them to still have the experience.

"The impact this disease has had on the poultry industry and how quickly it is spreading is clear," said Lisa Reiff, MAFE Executive Director. "While it's unfortunate that poultry exhibitions are canceled for this year, it's crucial youth still have an opportunity to participate in fair activities. MAFE is working with MDARD, MSU and 4-H to identify alternatives for poultry exhibitors and will use this opportunity to help further educate the public about our state's poultry industry."

County fairs and local exhibitors are encouraged to go to the MSU Extension website - msue.msu.edu/poultryshows - to get a list of options for poultry exhibitors. Those options include suggestions for showmanship, breed classes, market classes and auctions.

MDARD, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Departments of Agriculture Veterinary Services and Wildlife Services, and MSU are working together to conduct avian influenza surveillance and to monitor health of poultry, livestock, wildlife and residents in Michigan.

- Michigan residents who notice the death loss of three or more WILD birds should report it to DNR at 517-336-5030.
- If your backyard poultry flock has a high death loss or consistent pattern of death loss in a short period of time, report it to MDARD at 800-292-3939; (after hours emergencies) 517-373-0440.

For more information, visit www.michigan.gov/aviandiseases.

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