

We have rearranged the information in our updates. At the top of each update, you will find new information. In the section called Resources and Reference Materials, you will find useful information and links to important documents and websites.

New Infected Premises

There have been new detections of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in British Columbia since our last industry update on November 13, 2023. The new detections are BC-IP-134 (breeders, Chilliwack), and BC-IP-135 (turkeys, Aldergrove).

Please continue to report any unusual or unexpected mortality to the CFIA's sick bird line. The phone number is 403.338.5225.

DBS Reminder

Please remember that Dead Bird Surveillance (DBS) is mandatory for all producers/growers located in a Primary Control Zone. All bins will be distributed by the end of this week so CFIA expects all producers/growers to be participating in DBS beginning as soon as bins are delivered according to your schedule.

If enough farms are not doing DBS properly, CFIA will insist on live bird testing before any movements can take place. Live bird testing is time consuming for both CFIA and individual producers/growers and it means testers need to come on to your farm to perform the tests. Read more about DBS at the bottom of this update and call your commodity board if you have any questions.

Notice to Industry regarding current Avian influenza response in British Columbia – November 2023

- Since November 2, 2023 there have been 22 new infected premises in the Fraser Valley. Seven of these premises were also infected premises in 2022.
- The CFIA oversees destruction to ensure disease control is achieved and only undertakes destruction activities when the producer or industry cannot perform destruction on their own.
- The avian influenza response in British Columbia is the CFIA's highest animal health priority:
 - there are more than 320 employees deployed to the BC response which is close to 145% of all employees normally assigned to BC Food and Animal Operations
 - destruction and biocontainment teams from other provinces are on the ground to assist
 - efforts to identify additional CFIA personnel and contractors are ongoing
- Even with increased resources, there will be delays in the destruction of infected barns. The current delays are related to the availability of resources and not carbon dioxide supply.
- Destruction for most new premises will not take place within the preferred 48-hour window after confirmation.

- CFIA recognizes that delays in destruction are stressful for individual producers and the poultry sector.
- CFIA is currently working closely with the BC EOC on priority of Infected Premises (IPs) for destruction.
- The schedule for destruction will not be based on “first infected, first served” but will look at a number of factors to determine priority premises.
 - Factors for high priority premises include:
 - the welfare of the birds including clinical disease, age of birds/stage of production
 - commercial barns with clinical signs of disease (including other barns on the same premises)
 - the method of destruction required and number of birds onsite. Whole barn gassing is usually the most effective method for commercial operations
 - Factors that are considered medium priority status of a premises include:
 - request for separation status for individual barns
 - number of commercial farms within the 1 km zone
 - barns on the same premises with no clinical signs
 - Factors that are low on priority status include:
 - feed supply on farm if resupply can be completed without compromising biocontainment
 - impact on return to production/production cycles

Information on Disposal Activities

We know that once your farm has been depopulated, you want to get started on disposal as soon as possible. We know that you feel pressure to get your piles capped so your neighbours can place birds. That being said, there are some good reasons to wait for CFIA to do the site assessment before you begin.

Typically, site assessment visits are done in the day or two following destruction; however, because of the large number of Infected Premises (IPs) in BC right now, that timeline is being stretched. CFIA has brought many staff in from other provinces but the number of IPs and the short time frame in which these infections occurred is making their work difficult.

Once a site assessment is completed, things can progress quite quickly, but this is an imperative first step. This assessment ensures that all material to be disposed of are accounted for and incorporated into the disposal plan. Even if you have gone through this process in the past, CFIA requests that you wait for a CFIA site assessment. Should producers/growers elect to start disposal prior to a CFIA site assessment and disposal plan, they should be aware of the following risks of proceeding without an approved plan:

- CFIA needs to be notified of this plan and the premises will then be taken off of the list for site assessments in order to redirect staff. CFIA will attend the site when it is reported that disposal is complete. If it is discovered at that time that some material may have not been included, milestones for the premises will be delayed.
- CFIA will compensate for the most cost effective manner of disposal and should additional steps be taken, or additional resources are required to adjust or correct (possibly including a change of

disposal method), these costs may not be eligible for compensation. If materials have been included in the disposal that would not have been deemed infected, the value of these items and the labor to dispose of them will not be compensated.

- CFIA must be notified upon completion of disposal as there are steps we must take to ensure that the virus is eliminated. Without CFIA notification there will be delays in milestones and this may have implications on the PCZ dates.

If you have weighed the pros and cons of waiting for a CFIA site assessment and have decided to move forward with your disposal activities without the site assessment, you can take the following steps. Notify your Case Officer and fill out this document ([ADD LINK](#)) and send it to your Case Officer. By sending this completed form to your Case Officer, you will be providing notice to CFIA that you are no longer requesting a site assessment. Remember that CFIA will have to visit your farm to approve the disposal activities and help you move on to the next step.

If you've weighed the pros and cons and have decided to wait for a site assessment, you can complete the following steps while waiting for the meeting. Complete your biocontainment SOP template (if applicable) and move equipment and shaving trucks on/off site. You can also organize a meeting via your Case Officer with the Compensation group following depopulation.

Resources & Reference Materials

Movement Permits

Have a question about what permit you need? Visit the [permit page](#) on the CFIA website or call your commodity board.

Primary Control Zones (PCZs)

Do you want to know how close you are to a Primary Control Zone? Use the CFIA's [PCZ page](#). Remember, if your farm is touched by a control zone, your premise would normally be considered to be included. Control zones are established around infected farms to ensure that the poultry within the zone remain healthy and free of HPAI and to control the spread of the disease.

Red Biosecurity Resources

All poultry farms across British Columbia are extremely vulnerable to HPAI at this time. The best way to mitigate your risk is to ensure you're implementing all of the red biosecurity protocols at all times. Please refer to the [BC Poultry Biosecurity Program Reference Guide](#).

Take Care of Yourself

All producers/growers are under a tremendous amount of stress right now. If you, or one of your colleagues, friends, or family members are feeling anxious or stressed, don't hesitate to visit the [AgSafe](#) mental health website. They have valuable resources that you may find helpful.