



Recommended biosecurity measures to reduce risks of HPAI on dairy farms (4th edition)

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**Guidance subject to updates as we learn more about the transmission of the virus.*

To protect your farm from the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), it is key to heighten biosecurity measures on farms. The biosecurity measures recommended below aim to minimize various risks of transmission.

At this time, epidemiological investigations suggest that introducing an infected cow, and/or contaminated feed or water can each spread the virus in a herd.

Prevent HPAI in your dairy herd:

- *Avoid cattle movement into your herd*
- *If you must purchase cattle, test for HPAI before they enter your herd*
- *Prevent contact with wildlife*

If you see clinical signs that look like HPAI in your herd:

- *Contact your veterinarian*
- *Isolate affected animals*

Information from the CFIA

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has developed a [webpage](#) to keep the public, farmers and veterinarians informed of this disease, as well as biosecurity measures and other risk-mitigating initiatives. The CFIA is encouraging the voluntary testing of milk samples from healthy cows to help you make decisions about moving cattle on and off farm. Your sample must be submitted by your herd veterinarian and CFIA covers the cost of the laboratory test.

Milk Safety and Quality

Pasteurization kills harmful bacteria and viruses while retaining milk's nutritional properties and ensures that the milk we drink is safe.

Recommendations for Canadian dairy farmers

Provincial responsibilities

Provincial governments - more specifically, provincial departments of agriculture and chief veterinarians - are responsible for the response and coordination of measures to be taken in case of detection of the disease on a dairy farm. Consequently, Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) encourages dairy farmers to also connect with their provincial association for additional details on their response protocols at the farm.

Prevention measures

DFC advises dairy farmers to heighten biosecurity measures in dairy farms to prevent possible risks associated with this new disease. The recommendations below aim to enable you to protect your farm. These recommendations are based on [proAction](#)[®] biosecurity measures, specific recommendations to [Prevent an Outbreak \(Being Vigilant about Animal Introductions\)](#), and guidance from CFIA.

Recommendations to protect against the introduction of HPAI

To limit the risk of transmission from cow to cow

- Avoid animal movements as much as possible. It is a good time to keep a closed herd.
- If introducing new animals or re-introducing animals back to the herd is necessary:
 - Source animals from herds with a known health status.
 - Avoid sourcing animals from areas where HPAI is present in dairy herds.
 - Test cows before bringing them into your herd (including cows returning to your herd).
 - When moving cattle, start with a cleaned and disinfected livestock trailer.
 - Report animal movements both in and off your farm to DairyTrace (SimpliTrace in QC), ideally within 24 hours.
 - Isolate and monitor new and returning animals for clinical signs for 30 days, especially if there is a risk these animals were in contact with animals from affected areas.
 - Review and update your proAction procedures for re-introduction of cattle.
 - Follow heightened biosecurity practices and increase herd monitoring for signs of illness.
- Wear rubber gloves when milking all cows, especially any sick cows. Disinfect or at least rinse hands between cows.
- Isolate sick cattle from the herd immediately.

To limit the risk of introducing virus from people or objects

- Limit visitors to your barn to essential suppliers. Take increased precautions for those who have been in affected areas or farms.
- Ask suppliers questions about the farms they visited, and any biosecurity practices they followed. Insist that they clean equipment that has been in contact with animals or milk from other farms.
- If service providers must enter barn or have close contact with your cattle:
 - Ensure they wear clean clothes, adequate biosecurity gear, and disinfected boots.
 - Work with young and healthy cattle first, and with sick cattle last.
 - Clean and disinfect boots and equipment after being in the sick area.
- Keep a visitor log for all visitors.
- Restrict access to unnecessary vehicles that move between farms.

To reduce risk from birds

- Make the farmyard as unwelcoming to birds as you can by removing bird boxes near barns.
- Quickly clean up feed that may have spilled on the ground.
- Minimize risks of contamination to water supply by wild birds or other animals (e.g., skunks, raccoons).
- Keep feed in enclosed areas, under roof or covered to reduce access by birds and other animals.
- Avoid bringing a tractor/equipment that is typically accessible to birds inside the barn.

What to do if HPAI is suspected or confirmed on your farm

- Contact your regular herd veterinarian.
- Isolate sick cows so they do not have access to the same feed or water as healthy cattle.
- Milk sick cattle separately.
 - For your personal safety, wear masks, non-ventilated goggles and gloves when handling sick cattle, especially when milking sick cattle or handling their milk.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Remove and launder clothing worn around sick animals and shower at the end of the day.
- Change clothing and footwear before caring for other species.
- Train staff and family on protective measures they should take.

What to do with raw milk on farm

- Milk sick cows separately (last) and discard the milk. Sanitize milking equipment before using on healthy cows to avoid potential spread to other cows.
- Buy milk replacer or pasteurize any farm milk that is given to calves, cats, or any other animals on the farm (bring milk to 72°C for 15 sec).

Signs to watch for on the farm

If you detect the following symptoms or clinical signs in your herd, contact your veterinarian immediately:

- sudden decrease in milk production;
- colostrum-like consistency of milk;
- negative or trace positive California Mastitis Test (CMT) result;
- decreased feed intake;
- decreased rumen motility;
- respiratory signs, including clear nasal discharge;
- sometimes fever.

If you find dead or neurologic animals (for example wild birds, raccoons, etc.) on the premises, do not handle them. Contact your local office of the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (CWHC). Contact your veterinarian if cats exhibit unusual signs.

Useful links

- CFIA Information on [HPAI in livestock](#)
- Testing healthy cattle for HPAI: [Guidance for private veterinarians](#)
- Biosecurity resources: [Preventing an Outbreak: Being Vigilant about Animal Introductions](#)
- Contact your local office of the [Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative \(CWHC\)](#)