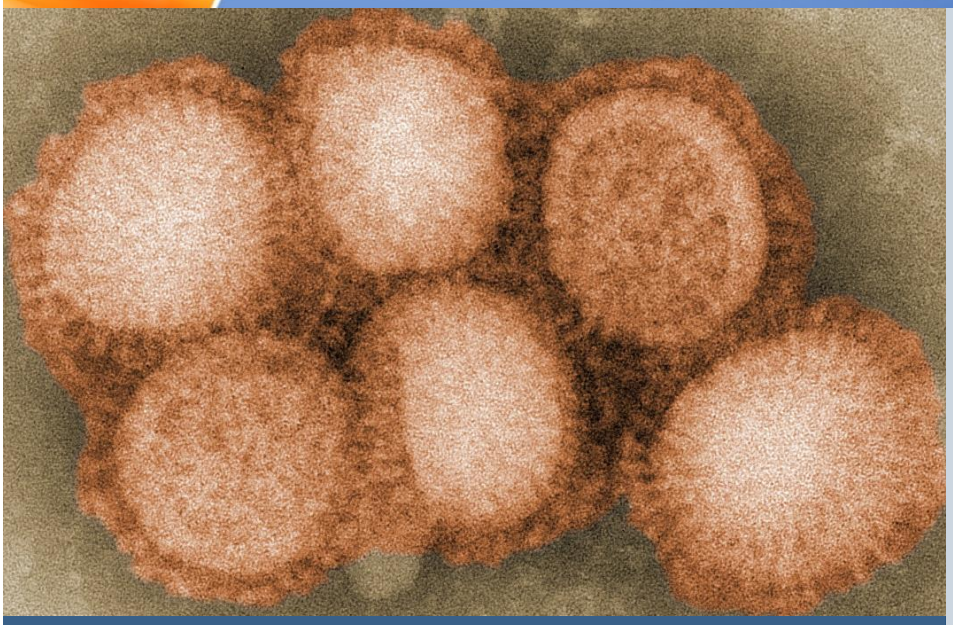
The Sentinel

Newsletter of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team



H1N1 virus

Special Features of this Issue:

- *Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Update*
- *Free Webinars: National Farm Safety and Health Week*
- *SART Funded Planning Section Chief Training*

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Found in Non-Commercial Backyard Flock in Seminole County

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) and the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) have confirmed the presence of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in a non-commercial backyard flock (non-poultry) in Seminole County, Florida.

Samples from the flock were tested at the Bronson Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, part of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network, and confirmed at the APHIS National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa.

FDACS and USDA, APHIS are working closely on a joint incident response. The affected premises has been quarantined, and birds on the property were depopulated to prevent the spread of the disease. Birds from the affected flock will not enter the food chain.

Anyone involved with poultry production from the small backyard to the large commercial producer should review their biosecurity activities to assure the health of their birds. APHIS has materials about biosecurity, including videos, checklists, and a toolkit available here.

Please read the full FDACS announcement included at the end of this edition of *The Sentinel*.

"FDACS and USDA, APHIS are working closely on a joint incident response. The affected premises has been quarantined, and birds on the property were depopulated to prevent the spread of the disease."

— Dr. Michael Short
State Veterinarian
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Update

On June 29, 2022, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) was notified that a single rabbit residing in Orange County tested positive for Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus, Type 2 (RHDV-2). The premises had no other animals. This is the fourth confirmed case of RHDV-2 in domestic rabbits in Florida. There have been no detections in wild rabbits in the state. Veterinary clinics throughout Florida now have access to RHDV-2 vaccine, and FDACS encourages discussion with your veterinarian regarding vaccination of pet rabbits.

Prior positive RHDV-2 cases were detected in Palm Beach, St. Johns and Lake Counties on May 7, 2022, October 19, 2021, and December 30, 2020, respectively. There is currently no evidence that the virus has spread to domestic or wild rabbits from the four positive detections. Rabbit owners should continue to take prudent biosecurity measures, including not purchasing hay or other commodities originating in RHDV-2 affected states.

European rabbit with ocular jaundice

Affected states currently include Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Kentucky, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming. Cuba is also affected. The USDA experimentally approved Medgene vaccine which targets the U.S. strain of RHDV-2 is being approved for use by FDACS. In addition, importation approval of the European RHDV vaccines by licensed, accredited veterinarians began in July 2021.

Rabbit producers should contact their veterinarian regarding vaccinating their rabbits for RHDV-2. Veterinarians should follow the step-by-step process for FDACS and USDA approval as instructed in the RHDV-2 Vaccine Order Instructions. For additional information, please visit: Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease FAQs.

FDACS encourages continued assistance with reporting mortalities, which are submitted for surveillance testing as warranted. Sick or dead wild rabbits should be reported to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Wildlife Health Hotline: (866) 293-9282 or wildlifehealth@myFWC.com. Sick or dead domestic rabbits should be reported to the Division of Animal Industry at RAD@FDACS.gov or calling (850) 410-0900.

Read more: Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Update (fdacs.gov)

FREE WEBINARS!

National Farm Safety and Health Week 2022

PROTECTING AGRICULTURE'S FUTURE
NATIONAL FARM SAFETY AND HEALTH WEEK
SEPTEMBER 18-24, 2022

	12 PM - 1 PM CT	2 PM - 3 PM CT
MONDAY SEPTEMBER 19	Crashes Involving Agricultural Vehicles in the Southwest Region	ATV/UTV Safety for Farm Women
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 20	Putting Time and Distance Between Someone at Risk of Suicide and Lethal Means	Heat and Wildfire Smoke Exposure Among Agricultural Workers
WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 21	Protecting and Promoting the Health of Young Agricultural Workers	Farm Youth Mental Health: What We Know and How to Help
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 22	Roundtable Discussion: Grain Bin Safety	Confined Space: Grain Bin Entry
FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 23	More than Milk: Strong Bones and Injury Prevention for Aging Women in Ag	¡Basta! Working Together to Prevent Sexual Harassment in the Ag Workplace

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

AgHealth Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health

HICAHS

PACIFIC NORTHWEST AGRICULTURAL SAFETY AND HEALTH CENTER
farming • fishing • forestry

Southwest Center
FOR AGRICULTURAL HEALTH, INJURY PREVENTION, AND EDUCATION

Scan the QR code or click here to register. Participants only need to register one time to attend all NFSHW webinars.

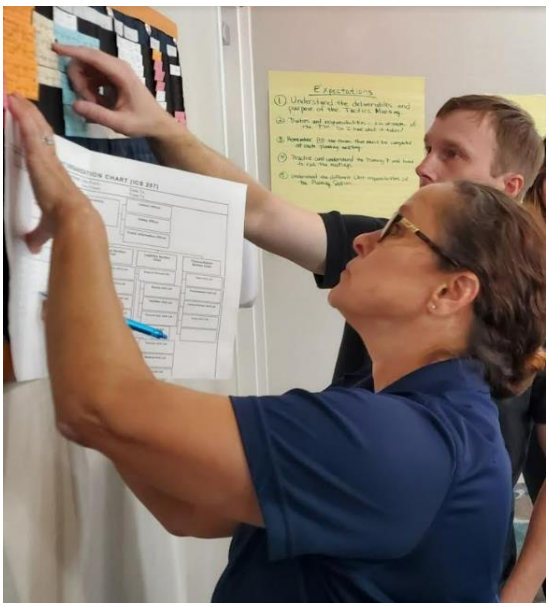
AgriSafe® Network
Protecting the People Who Feed the World
agrisafe.org

SART Holds Planning Section Chief Training

The Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART) funded and held the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) certified Incident Command System (ICS) All Hazards Planning Section Chief training on July 19 – 22, 2022, in Fort Myers Florida. Twenty-two Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) staff attended representing the divisions of Animal Industry, Plant Industry, Food Safety, Agricultural Environmental Services, and Forestry. This course provided FDACS Emergency Support Function 17 (ESF 17) personnel with the information necessary to understand the roles and responsibilities of the Planning Section Chief for managing all documentation and planning processes for the ESF 17 Incident Management Team (IMT) in all-hazards incident response.

The Planning Section Chief training also walked participants through the planning P process, illustrating the different meetings that are held throughout the operational period. The operational period is a key aspect of an incident as it is the period of time scheduled for execution of a given set of tactical actions; it drives the Planning Section's meeting schedule for obtaining information about assigned resources, plans for the next operational period and situation reports. Participants held a mock Planning Meeting as well as the Operational Briefing. Participants were given an overview of the Planning Section, Situation Unit, and Resource Unit. The training went over the initial incident response, showing participants that the importance and focus at this stage is to gather information.

The role of the Planning Section Chief is vital to the success of an incident. Providing training to FDACS staff, SART and ESF 17 ensures that any IMT that gets activated will have all positions adequately trained and prepared.



Photos: (left) trainees verify ICS 203 Assignment Lists; (right) trainees check in resources on T-cards

Pet-Friendly Sheltering
Online Training (FL-017)

The Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART) has published an online, state-certified training on pet-friendly sheltering—the first of its kind to be offered in Florida. The online training provides guidance on how to plan for and operate a pet-friendly shelter to ensure that individuals evacuating from a disaster with household pets are accommodated.

This training will include useful information on how to:

- Use the Incident Command System in pet-friendly shelter planning and operations;
- Plan for a pet-friendly shelter;
- Understand the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act (PETS Act);
- Establish partnerships for resource coordination;
- Deliver a unified message to the public before, during and after an emergency, and;
- Set up, operate and demobilize a pet-friendly shelter.

Students will receive a downloadable **Tool Kit** that offers guidance and plan templates, and a **state-certified Certificate of Completion** approved by the Florida Division of Emergency Management.

COURSE DATE
August 2020

COURSE LENGTH
4 hours

COURSE FEE
Free

COURSE MODE
100% online at
www.FLSART.org

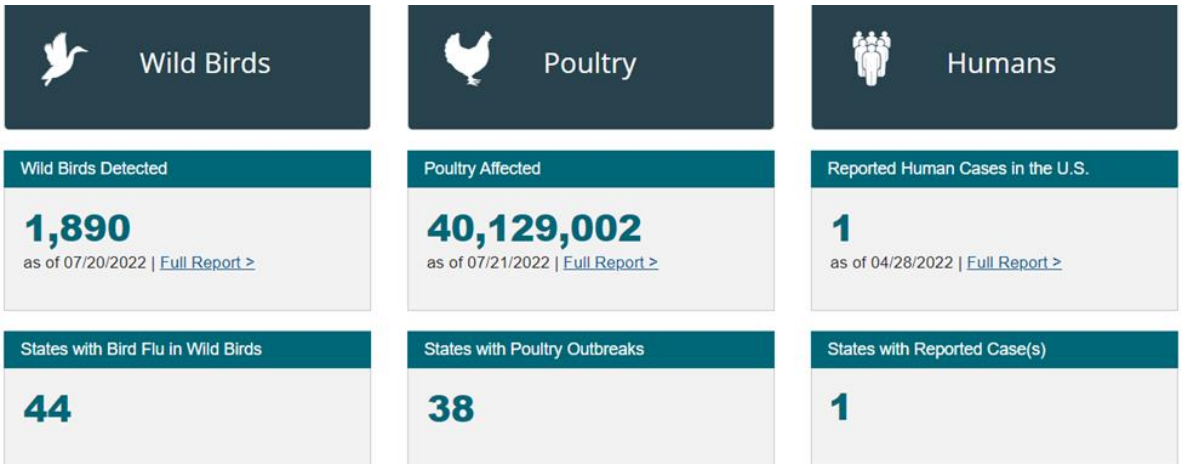
PRIMARY AUDIENCE
Emergency Managers
County Employees
Veterinary/Animal Services
Shelter Volunteers

PROVIDED BY
Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART)

CERTIFICATE
State-Certified
Course Code FL-017

POINT OF CONTACT
LeiAnna Tucker
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
(850) 410-0920
LeiAnna.Tucker@FDACS.gov

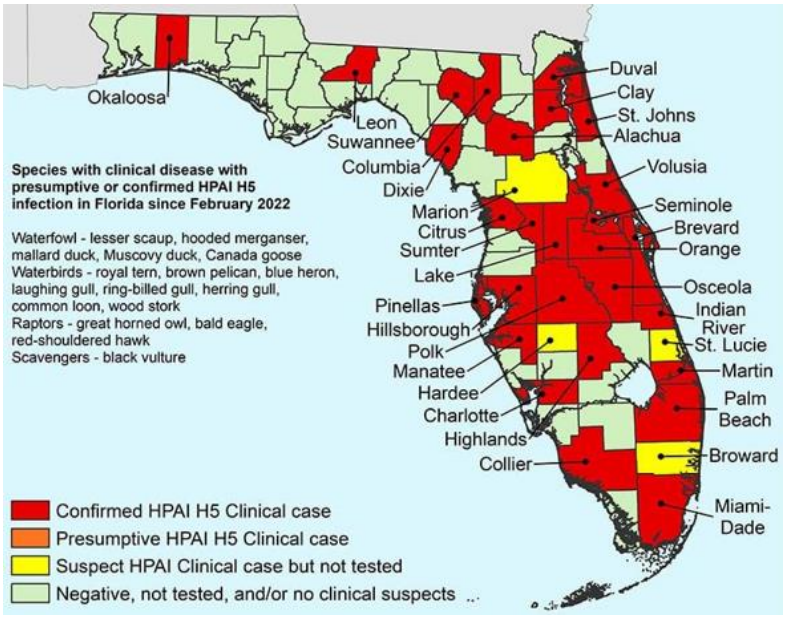
Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Found in Wild Birds in Florida (continued from cover page)



Bird Flu Current Situation Summary | Avian Influenza (Flu) (cdc.gov) Updated July 25, 2022

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has been monitoring the presence of confirmed cases of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) strain: H5 2.3.4.4 in a lesser scaup, black vultures and other avian species around Florida. There is a low risk of HPAI transmission to humans and, to date, there has only been one known human infection in North America.

To prevent the spread of HPAI, the public should avoid handling sick or dead wildlife, prohibit the contact of domestic birds with wild birds, and report wild bird mortalities to FWC so deaths can be investigated. Please be advised that because HPAI is not treatable and is easily transmitted in wild birds, some wildlife rehabbers may not be accepting these animals at this time. Those with free-range chickens are at higher risk of HPAI infection due to lack of security and close proximity to wild birds.



The FWC is working closely with the United States Department of Agriculture-Wildlife Services, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, University of Florida, National Wildlife Health Center, Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study, Florida Department of Health, and wildlife rehabilitators to investigate mortality events involving wild birds. For more information on HPAI in wild birds, visit the FWC Avian Influenza website.

USDA

United States Department of Agriculture

Checklist: Tips To Help Keep Your Flocks Healthy

This checklist is 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.

- ☐ **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.

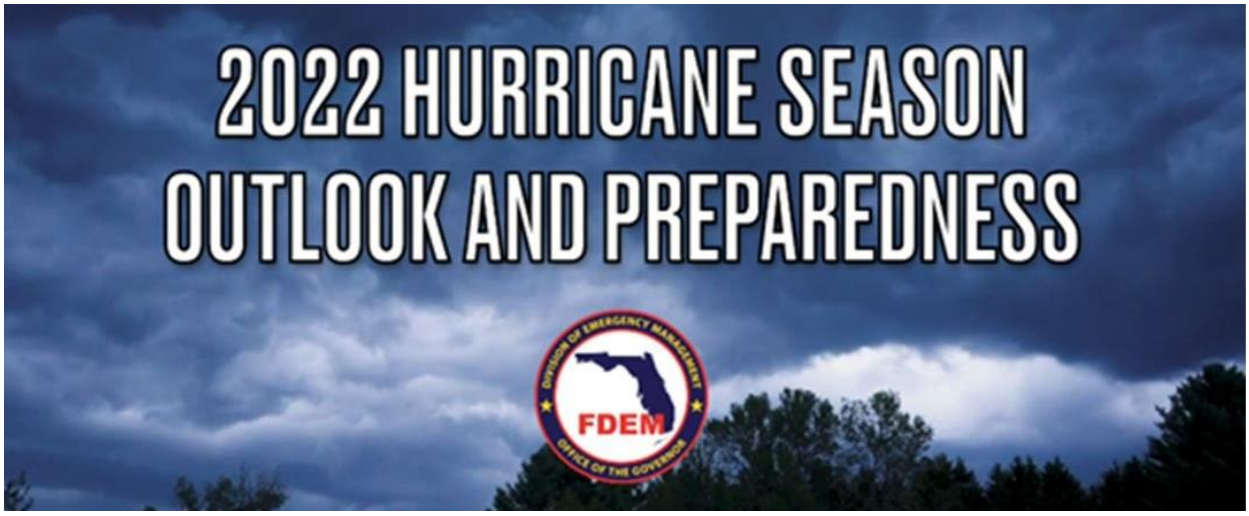
For more information about how to keep your flocks healthy, follow **Defend the Flock** on **Facebook** and **Twitter** and visit **www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth/defendtheflock.**

DEFEND THE FLOCK
BIOSECURITY
Let's keep our poultry healthy together

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Program Aid No. 2235-1 • Issued November 2018

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Florida Meteorologists Share Important Hurricane Safety Tips



2022 Hurricane Season Outlook and Preparedness Video, click here.

State Meteorologists at the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) share important Hurricane Safety tips to help prepare Florida residents for the 2022 Atlantic Hurricane Season. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is predicting an above-average season with a predicted 14-21 named storms, with 6-10 becoming hurricanes and 3-6 becoming major hurricanes.

"As our Meteorologists continue their preparations for the 2022 Atlantic Hurricane Season, I am encouraging all Floridians to do the same," said FDEM Director Kevin Guthrie. "There are many cost-effective ways to ensure your homes and businesses are prepared as we enter the height of hurricane season."

Hurricane Preparedness Tips:

- **Know Your Home, Know Your Zone** – Each year it's important for residents to know if they live in an evacuation zone, a low-lying, flood-prone area, a mobile home or an unsafe structure during hurricane season. It is also very important for residents to know their home and its ability to withstand strong winds and heavy rain. floridadisaster.org/know for more information.
- **Make a Plan** – Every household should have a disaster plan specific to the needs of their household. Every individual in the household should assist in developing the emergency plan and understand the plan. Visit floridadisaster.org/family-plan for more information.
- Create a List of Important Items and Documents – During a storm, residents may need to evacuate quickly. Creating a list of important items and documents before a storm threatens the state will ensure residents will not forget important items during an evacuation.
- **Review Insurance Policies** – Residents should review their insurance policies prior to hurricane season to ensure they have enough coverage to fully recover from potential storm damages.
- **Keep Gas Tanks Half-Full** – During hurricane season, residents should keep their gas tanks half-full to avoid gas shortages and long lines at gas stations.
- **Purchase Nonperishable Items at Grocery Stores** – During grocery trips, residents are encouraged to pick up extra nonperishable items, such as canned fruits and vegetables, that can be included in their disaster supply kit to avoid last-minute crowds and shortages prior to a disaster

For more safety and preparedness tips visit FloridaDisaster.org/PlanPrepare.

Continued, next page.

SART Developing the Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture

Throughout this year, the Florida State Agricultural Response Team has been developing the *Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture*. The Guide is for the County Emergency Operation Centers to use as a reference guide for disasters involving animals and agriculture. As we near completion of this guide we would like to share some of the resources we have featured. The below article titled "Disaster Preparedness for Pets" is a sneak peek of what is available in the guide.

Disaster Preparedness for Pets

If there is not an option for people to seek an emergency shelter with their pets, such as a pet-friendly shelter, then people could risk their own lives to save their pets by sheltering at home. In general, local preparedness plans that accommodate people with pets, service animals and other animals support public safety and mental well-being and achieve greater cooperation among evacuees. Keeping pets and their owners together has mutual benefits and reduces stress for not only the human but the pet, too. The human-animal bond has a positive impact on the family – pets included – and has psychological benefits of comfort and security. When a person is without his pet, that person can experience sadness, stress, anxiety, or loss of unity until he is reunited with his pet. Disasters exacerbate these stresses even more because of the strong bond and attachment that owners have with their pets. The safety of pets during a disaster is a human responsibility, and if we keep animals safe during disaster, then we are also keeping humans safe.

If an Evacuation is Necessary, Take Your Pets

The single most important thing you can do to protect your pets is to take them with you when you evacuate. Animals left behind in a disaster can easily be injured, lost or killed. Animals left inside your home can escape through storm-damaged areas, such as broken windows. Animals turned loose to fend for themselves are likely to become victims of exposure, starvation, predators, contaminated food or water, or accidents. Leaving dogs tied or chained outside in a disaster is a death sentence. If you leave during a disaster, even if you think you may be gone only for a few hours, take your animals. Once you leave, you have no way of knowing how long you will be kept out of the area, and you may not be able to go back for your pets.

Do Not Forget ID

Your pets should always wear up-to-date identification. It is a good idea to include the phone number of a friend or relative outside your immediate area. If your pet is lost, you will want to provide a number on the tag that will be answered even if you are out of your home.

Continued, next page.

SART Developing the Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture (continued)

Find a Safe Place Ahead of Time

Plan ahead to ensure that your family and pets will have a safe place to stay. Do not wait until disaster strikes to do your research. Contact hotels outside your immediate area to check policies on accepting pets. Ask about any restrictions on number, size and species. Ask if "no pet" policies would be waived in an emergency. Make a list of pet-friendly places and keep it handy. Call ahead for a reservation as soon as you think you might have to leave your home. Check with friends, relatives or others outside your immediate area. Ask if they would be able to shelter you and your animals or just your animals, if necessary. If you have more than one pet, you may have to be prepared to house them separately. Make a list of boarding facilities and veterinary offices that might be able to shelter animals in emergencies and include 24-hour telephone numbers. Ask your local animal shelter if it provides foster care or shelter for pets in an emergency. This should be your last resort, as animal shelters have limited resources and are likely to be stretched to their limits during an emergency.

Evacuation Planning

You may not be in a flood zone or have to flee a wildfire, but even a hazardous material incident on a nearby street could force you to evacuate immediately. It pays to be prepared! Follow evacuation orders from local officials. All mobile home residents should have an evacuation plan at the first sign of a disaster. Evacuate to the safest location you can that is as close as possible to home. Long-distance evacuation can be a problem when highways are crowded. When planning for hurricanes, identify your evacuation zone in case local officials recommend or order the evacuation of your zone. Be prepared for one hurricane category higher than the one being forecast, because hurricanes often increase in strength just before making landfall. Your local humane organization or local emergency management agency may be able to provide you with information about your community's disaster response plans.

Pet-Friendly Shelters

There must be options where people can go with their pets to shelter safe from the disaster. A pet-friendly shelter is a public emergency shelter that accommodates people and their household pets. The federal Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006 (The PETS Act) and Florida law require that state and local emergency preparedness plans address the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals prior to, during, and following a major disaster or emergency. Contact the county emergency management agency and check their website or social media for pet-friendly shelters available during a disaster.

Continued, next page.

SART Developing the Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture (continued)

If You Do Not Evacuate

If your family and pets must wait out a storm or other disaster at home, identify a safe area of your home where you can all stay together. Keep dogs on leashes and cats in carriers, and make sure they are wearing identification. Have any medications and a supply of pet food and water inside watertight containers, along with your other emergency supplies. As the disaster approaches, do not wait until the last minute to get ready. Warnings of hurricanes or other disasters may be issued hours, or even days, in advance. Contact your county emergency management agency and check their website or social media to confirm emergency shelters for you and your pets. Bring pets into the house and confine them so you can leave with them quickly, if necessary. Make sure each pet and pet carrier have up-to-date identification and contact information. Include information about your temporary shelter location. Make sure your disaster supplies are ready to go, including your pet disaster kit.

In Case You are Not Home

An evacuation order may come, or a disaster may strike when you are not home. Make evacuation arrangements well in advance for a trusted neighbor, family member or friend to take your pets and meet you at a specified location. Be sure the person is comfortable with your pets, knows where your animals are likely to be, knows where your disaster supplies are kept, and can locate the key to your home. A pet-sitting service may be able to help but discuss the possibility well in advance.

After the Disaster

Planning and preparation will help you weather the disaster, but your home may be a very different place afterward, whether you have taken shelter at home or elsewhere. Do not allow your pets to roam loose. Familiar landmarks and smells might be gone, and your pet will probably be disoriented. Pets can easily get lost in such situations. For a few days, keep dogs on leashes and keep cats in carriers inside the house. If your house is damaged, they could escape and become lost. Be patient with your pets after a disaster. Try to get them back into their normal routines as soon as possible and be ready for behavioral problems that may result from the stress of the situation. If behavioral problems persist, or if your pet seems to be having any health problems, talk to your veterinarian.

African Swine Fever Update

In 2021, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the detection of African Swine Fever (ASF) in the Dominican Republic (Announcement below). ASF is a foreign animal disease. Increased biosecurity and vigilance is warranted. Please report any sick swine with clinical signs consistent with ASF to the State Veterinarian's Office through the e-mail address RAD@FDACS.gov, or by calling (850) 410-0900 (during office hours) or 1-800-342-5869 (after hours). You can also file a report online.

Clinical signs of ASF in swine can include reddening of the skin, listlessness, vomiting, bloody diarrhea, conjunctivitis, lack of an escape response, trembling, complete loss of hind leg functioning, and high death loss.

Photo Credit: USDA APHIS Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center

It is important to note that Classical Swine Fever has been present in Haiti and the Dominican Republic for many years and, therefore, the U.S. does not receive pork products or live swine imports from either country. The highest risk of ASF introduction into the U.S. is from pork products brought in by international travelers via sea or air. The U.S. Customs and Border Patrol has increased inspections of products and personal items brought into the U.S from affected countries.

More information regarding ASF can be found on the USDA website.
Click here for the FDACS Announcement on ASF.

In the News…

- NOAA: Strengthening Resilience Before, During, and After Disasters
- FDACS: Giant African Land Snail Eradication
- FDACS: Oriental Fruit Fly Emergency Alert
- NY Times: Meet the Canine Officers Guarding American Agriculture
- FDACS: Detector Dog Inspection Program

UF/IFAS Florida Gardening Calendars

The Gardening Calendar publications on the UF/IFAS Solutions for Your Life website gives Florida gardeners a monthly guide for what to plant and do in their gardens and includes links to useful gardening websites, all based on University of Florida research and expertise. Three different editions of the calendar provide specific tips for each of Florida's climate zones—North, Central, and South.

Vegetables to Plant in August- Gardening Solutions - University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (ufl.edu)

Counties, Is Your Contact Information up to date on the SART Website?

Please review your county emergency contact information at https://flsart.org/resource/countyinformation.jsp.

If you need to make changes to your county contact information, please send a request to Benjamin Motes at Benjamin.Motes@FDACS.gov or LeiAnna Tucker at LeiAnna.Tucker@FDACS.gov.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Florida State Animal Response Coalition

Florida State Animal Response Coalition (FLSARC) provides **Small Animal Emergency Sheltering training** for Florida communities. These courses teach the unique procedures, skills, and knowledge necessary to build and operate a temporary emergency animal shelter in response to natural disasters and animal cruelty cases. These courses were created and designed by experts from many organizations including Florida SART, University of Florida Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (VETS) Team, and leadership of FLSARC.

Awareness Level	Operations Level
• August 27, 2022 • September 10, 2022	• TBD

To register, visit: https://flsarc.org/training

SART Monthly Webinar

Scheduled for August 19th, 2:00 - 3:15 PM EST. Agenda topics include an update on the In-Kind partner contributions, an animal disease update, Animal Technical Rescue training update, and SART updates. This meeting is for SART partner agencies and is not intended for the public. Please contact Benjamin Motes at Benjamin.Motes@FDACS.gov for additional information.

Food Safety and Food Defense Report

A special section dedicated to feed and food emergency planning and response.

FDACS Division of Food Safety is responsible for assuring the public of a safe, wholesome, and properly represented food supply through permitting and inspection of food establishments, inspection of food products, and performance of specialized laboratory analysis on a variety of food products sold or produced in the state. The Division of Food Safety monitors food from the farm gate, through processing and distribution, to the retail point of purchase.

FDACS Food Safety Assists in Public Health Investigation

The Food Safety Team has been assisting the Florida Department of Health and other state and federal agencies in their public health investigation of a listeriosis outbreak linked to ice cream. The division's food and dairy inspectors have collected hundreds of samples (both product and within the manufacturing environment) which have been or are currently being evaluated for Listeria Monocytogenes (L. Mono) by the division's food safety laboratory. Listeriosis, the illness caused by L. Mono, is a major health concern that can lead to severe health complications for elder and immunocompromised individuals as well as pregnant women and their fetus.

Food Safety for the Summer Season

Summer is the perfect time to enjoy picnics with friends and family in Florida. Did you know there is way to pack your cooler safely to reduce foodborne illness? Check out the videos below and the Division of Food Safety's Consumer Resources and Outreach website to learn important food safety tips for the summer season, including cooler safety, grilling safety, tips for cleaning your grill, safe grilling temperatures, and more!

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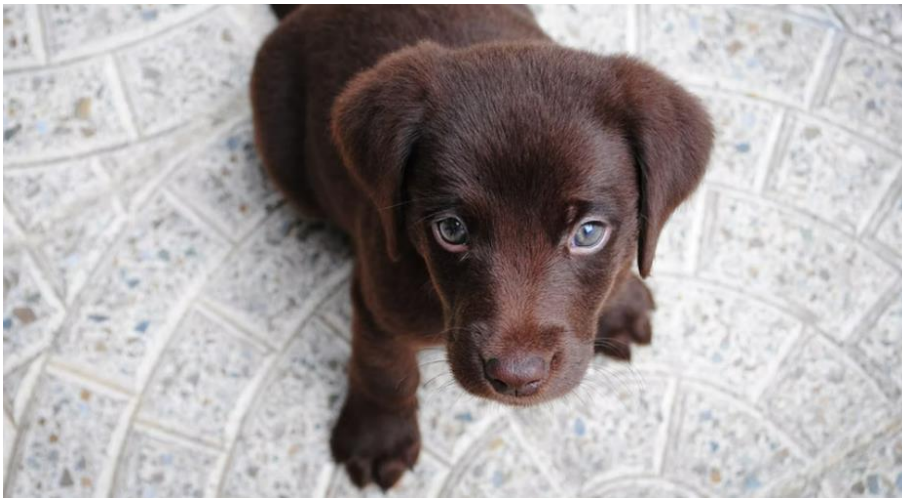
SART Resources and Links



Large Animal Emergency Training from The University of Florida Emergency Treatment Services:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PIeLye_xBkA&t=4s

FEMA National Resources Hub:
National Resource Hub - Preparedness Toolkit
FEMA Resources on YouTube

Veterinary Services Training and Exercise Program (VSTEP):
USDA APHIS | Veterinary Services Training and Exercise Program

Pet Sheltering Resources
https://flsart.org/resource/petshelter

Ask IFAS: Disaster Preparedness and Recovery
https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/entity/topic/disaster_preparedness_and_recovery

Please log in and update your membership information online at:

www.FLSART.org

About the *SART Sentinel*

The *SART Sentinel* is an email newsletter prepared monthly by the members of the **Florida State Agricultural Response Team** on the Florida SART website at www.FLSART.org.

If you have a story or photo that you would like to have considered for publication in the *SART Sentinel*, please contact the editors.

Editing Services: The Turner Network, LLC under contract with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry.
E-mail: flsart@turnernetwork.com

Associate Editor: LeiAnna Tucker, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry.
E-mail: LeiAnna.Tucker@FDACS.gov

Division of Animal Industry
(850) 410-0900

The Mayo Building
407 South Calhoun Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0800

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Commissioner Nicole "Nikki" Fried

2022 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Announcement
July 22, 2022

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) and the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) have confirmed the presence of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in a non-commercial backyard flock (non-poultry) in Seminole County, Florida.

Samples from the flock were tested at the Bronson Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, part of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network, and confirmed at the APHIS National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa.

FDACS and USDA, APHIS are working closely on a joint incident response. The affected premises has been quarantined, and birds on the property were depopulated to prevent the spread of the disease. Birds from the affected flock will not enter the food chain.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the public health risk associated with these avian influenza detections in birds remains low. As a reminder, the proper handling and cooking of all poultry and eggs to an internal temperature of 165 ˚F is recommended as a general food safety precaution.

As part of existing avian influenza response plans, Federal and State partners are working jointly on additional surveillance and testing in areas around the affected flock.

Anyone involved with poultry production from the small backyard to the large commercial producer should review their biosecurity activities to assure the health of their birds. APHIS has materials about biosecurity, including videos, checklists, and a toolkit available at: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program/dtf-resources/dtf-resources.

Affected Florida Premises 2022

Updated 7/22/2022

County and Flock Number	Date Confirmed Positive	Type of Operation	Status	Type
Seminole 01	7/21/2022	Backyard Non-Poultry	Depopulated	H5N1 HPAI

- Total number of domestic birds affected in Florida: 140
- Total number of farms affected: 1
- Total number of counties affected: 1

Hotlines

For general information regarding Florida's Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Response, please call 850-410-0900 or visit www.FDACS.gov/AI.

How to Report Sick Birds

Anyone working with birds, not just veterinarians, is required to report sick birds to the FDACS, so incidents can be investigated. Early detection makes a difference. If you notice any of the following in your flock, please report immediately:

- Sudden increase in bird deaths in your flock.
- Sneezing, gasping for air, coughing, and nasal discharge.
- Watery and green diarrhea.
- Lack of energy and poor appetite.
- Drop in egg production.
- Swelling around the eyes, neck and head.
- Purple discoloration of the wattles, combs and legs.
- Tremors, drooping wings, circling, twisting of the head and neck, or lack of movement.

Domestic Birds: Report unusual sickness or die-offs in domestic poultry to FDACS	850-410-0900 (during office hours) or 1-800-342-5869 (after hours) or by email at RAD@FDACS.gov
Wild Birds: Report dead wild birds to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission 1-866-293-9282 or website https://app.myfwc.com/FWRI/AvianMortality/

Biosecurity

Protecting your birds from disease has always been important. Maintain strict biosecurity measures by taking the following precautions to help minimize the risk of introduction of HPAI to your birds and protect Florida's poultry industry.

1. **Eliminate opportunities for your birds to interact with wild birds.** We know that wild waterfowl are carriers of disease, including HPAI. The best way to avoid diseases that wildlife carry is to keep domestic animals separated from the wild.
2. **If you have birds at home, do not visit another farm, home or facility that also has birds.** If you must visit another premises, be sure to shower and put on clean clothes and shoes beforehand.
3. **Remember that vehicles can be vehicles for disease transmission.** Before you drive down the road, consider where you are going. Will you be heading to the fair, another farm or a live bird market? If the answer is yes, be sure your vehicle is clean and free of dirt, manure and other organic material.
4. **Early detection can help prevent the spread of disease.** Knowing the signs to look for and monitoring the health of your birds on a regular basis is very important. Some signs

to look for include nasal discharge, unusually quiet birds, decreased food and water consumption, drop in egg production, and increased/unusual death loss in your flock.

5. **Report sick and dead birds to state health officials immediately.** If your birds appear sick or you have experienced increased mortality, report it immediately to the appropriate phone number located at the top of this webpage.

For Bird Handlers

- When working indoors, work in well-ventilated areas.
- When working outdoors, work upwind of birds to decrease risk of inhaling aerosols such as dust, feathers or dander.
- When possible, wear rubber or latex gloves that are disposable or can be disinfected.
- When possible, wear protective eye wear or a face shield while handling birds.
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water.
- Disinfect work surfaces and equipment.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke while handling birds.

For Hunters and Others Handling Birds

- Precautions should include hand washing, proper food preparation and clean up, and thorough cooking.
- Do not handle or eat sick game.
- Wear rubber or disposable latex gloves while handling and cleaning game, and thoroughly wash hands and all knives, equipment and surfaces that come in contact with game.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke while handling animals.
- Avian influenza viruses are destroyed by heat and not transmitted through cooked food. All fowl should be cooked thoroughly (well done or 160 degrees F)

Announcements

For more information regarding the national Avian Influenza response, please visit www.FDACS.gov/AI and USDA APHIS | 2022 Detections of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza.

Press Releases

Please visit Press Releases / News & Events / Home - Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (fdacs.gov) for the latest press releases regarding Florida's Avian Influenza Response.

Resources

- www.FDACS.gov/AI
- USDA APHIS | 2022 Detections of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
- USDA APHIS | Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)
- Influenza | Florida Department of Health (floridahealth.gov)
- www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/

Media Inquiries

Please contact Erin Moffet by email at Comms@FDACS.gov or by telephone, (850) 617-7700.