

TURKEYS

AVIAN INFLUENZA BIOSECURITY ADVICE

Q. Why is good biosecurity important?

To protect your turkeys from avian influenza you need to prevent them from coming into contact with potentially infected wild birds, their faeces and other secretions. The three principles of good biosecurity include: 1) segregation of wild and domestic birds, 2) good hygiene practices, and 3) disinfection.

Q. What are the risk factors for avian influenza specifically associated with turkey farming practices?

- Turkeys require frequent clean straw bedding. Straw used for bedding may be contaminated by wild birds prior to use if not properly stored. It may also attract wild birds and rodents.
- Turkey housing may not be wild bird proof.

Q. What are the most important biosecurity measures to prevent avian influenza?

1. Prevent wild bird contact with your birds, e.g. use of netting and fences
2. Only feed and water your turkeys under cover, and prevent wild bird access to your feed, water and bedding
3. Provide clean drinking water (not water that could have been contaminated by wild birds e.g. not lake or pond water), and prevent access to any outdoor water
4. Use designated clothing and footwear for attending and looking after your birds
5. Wash and disinfect your hands before and after looking after your birds, and place disinfectant foot dips at entrances to turkey areas
6. Separate turkeys from other poultry species
7. Prevent contact of turkeys with droppings from flying wild birds e.g. make sure any temporary housing is covered with canvas or tarpaulin
8. Keep the environment clean and unattractive to wild birds, e.g. keep grass cut, drain any unnecessary ground-water, and use scarecrows
9. Check your turkeys regularly for signs of illness
10. Prevent rodents, pets, unnecessary personnel, and vehicles from accessing your turkey living area
11. Only buy turkeys from a known reputable source - isolate any newly introduced turkeys for two weeks if possible, and look after your own birds before the new birds
12. Clean and disinfect any equipment before and after use
13. Provide only commercial feed (it is illegal to feed farmed animal species with food waste) and clean up any food spills

Further information on avian influenza can be found at:

<http://www.gov.ie/birdflu>



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