

# American Poultry Association

## Poultry Health Guidelines and Recommendations

Adopted April 2005

The American Poultry Association is very interested in making sure that birds present at any APA sponsored event are always treated in a humane manner and that state/provincial regulations governing the testing of birds are followed. Toward that end, the APA offers the following health and sanitation guidelines that the Association recommends for any show sponsoring an APA meet:

1. Participation in a swap section associated with any show should be limited to exhibitors at that show.
2. Swap participants should be limited to a certain number of birds per cage/coop to ensure that overcrowding is not a problem.
3. An officer of the show or designee should inspect the swap/sale section to ensure that birds showing any signs of disease are removed from the show building/grounds immediately.
4. Show management should ensure that water and food cups are available for all coops/cages and that feed and water are available for birds as soon as they are placed in cages/coops.

### APA Adopted Biosecurity Recommendations

The APA offers these guidelines to assist show managements in their efforts to implement a comprehensive biosecurity program at APA-sanctioned shows:

#### Biosecurity Checklist for Shows

This list of recommendations is designed to aid show managements in protecting the birds in their shows from contagious disease.

##### Before the Show

Make exhibitors aware that no entries from quarantined areas will be accepted. At the minimum, a catalog announcement should prohibit the entry of any bird that has been in or through an area under quarantine in the 60 days prior to the show. An announcement should be printed in the show catalogue that exhibitors must comply with all state/provincial poultry health guidelines and recommendations in effect wherever and whenever they show their birds.

### **At the Show**

1. Fog or spray the cage bottoms and cages with an approved disinfectant before bedding is added, before the show begins, making sure that there are no exhibitors/visitors in the show hall when the fogging/spraying takes place.
2. Do not make use of any previously used bedding or cups when setting up the show. Use only fresh bedding and disposable food and water containers.
3. Have an experienced poultry fancier inspect the birds as they are cooped in for any obvious evidence of disease or parasite infestation. If diseased birds are found, they should be removed from the showroom immediately. If parasite infestation is found, the birds should be sprayed with a mite/louse control product and then rechecked to assure that control has been achieved.
- 4) An alcohol-based hand-sanitizing product should be available for the use of any judge, show official, or exhibitor who wishes to sanitize his hands after handling birds. This is especially important for anyone handling a bird suspected of having a contagious disease.

# Poultry Exhibitor Health Declaration

As an exhibitor at the \_\_\_\_\_ show, I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge, the following statements are true. If any statement is not true, I will check "no" in the space provided after each statement and furnish an explanation. I understand that protecting the health of all entries is a major responsibility of all poultry shows and that my entry could be rejected if there are concerns about the health of my entry. If you have any questions regarding these questions or this form, please refer them to the Show Secretary PRIOR to the deadline for registration. This form should be returned to the show secretary with your entry and fees.

1. I certify that no birds in my flock have ever been vaccinated with the vent brush/infectious laryngotracheitis vaccine, which causes inoculated birds to become carriers. Use only tissue culture laryngotracheitis intraocular administration vaccine. I also certify that I have not vaccinated any birds in my flock with any kind of live or modified-live vaccine in the thirty days prior to this show.

NO\_\_\_\_\_ If you answered *no*, please explain:

2. I certify that my flock contains no birds that were shipped and/or transported in any other way out of or through an area that has been under quarantine in the last sixty days or that was under quarantine at the time the birds were transported.

NO\_\_\_\_\_ If you answered *no*, please explain:

3. I certify that to the best of my knowledge, no birds in my flock were showing signs of illness at the time that this entry was submitted.

NO\_\_\_\_\_ If you answered *no*, please explain:

4. I certify that each bird to be exhibited has been owned by me and in my direct custody for the previous 30 days.

NO\_\_\_\_\_ If you answered *no*, please explain:

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Exhibitor's Signature

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Date

# **American Poultry Association Recommended At-Home Biosecurity Measures for All Fanciers and Backyard Flocks**

## **Introduction**

Biosecurity, as practiced in the poultry industry, is a means to keep poultry operations as free from contaminants as possible. Viruses, bacteria, parasites, and fungi, can be kept to a minimum and sometimes be eliminated if effective biosecurity measures are followed. As a poultry fancier, there are ways that you can protect your valuable show birds, breeding operation, or simple backyard flock from the diseases and parasites that can rob your birds of their good health and sometimes their life. As poultry enthusiasts, practicing an active biosecurity program is also one way that we can illustrate to all concerned our commitment to preventing the spread of disease from our flocks to others.

In the commercial industry, it's not uncommon for someone visiting a poultry house to be required to take a full shower and put on protective clothing that you would normally see in a medical facility. And this is required even before that visitor is allowed to enter a building. There's usually a footbath containing a disinfectant to walk through as well. Even feed delivery trucks sometimes have their tires sprayed down with disinfectant before they enter a commercial facility, and the drivers are discouraged from leaving their vehicles.

The types of things that can be carried in can be devastating to a commercial grower. Entire flocks sometimes have to be destroyed to be sure that a contaminant has been fully removed from a facility and does not pose a threat to a neighboring facility or a geographic region as a whole. Once an outbreak of disease occurs, a massive disinfection process has to take place with testing before a new flock is brought in.

For most exhibition poultry fanciers and backyard flock owners, however, such biosecurity measures to prevent the spread of disease may not always be realistic. The APA recognizes that you are probably not going to go through the extreme measures of a commercial grower. However, we believe that there are some things that you can do that are both reasonable and relatively inexpensive. So for those fanciers who wish to do their part as a responsible member of the poultry community, the APA now offers these suggestions/recommendations:

# At-Home Biosecurity Measures for Exhibition Poultry Fanciers and Owners of Backyard Flocks

Precautions a fancier can take to minimize his flock's exposure to disease, without creating a lot of work for the fancier and causing him to incur considerable expense:

1. **Set Rodent Traps:** Rodents can range from the tiniest deer mouse on up to the Norway rat. Telltale signs are tiny black droppings in the feed cups. Rodents transfer disease and bacteria via their feet from cage to cage, and from the wild population to your coop. *Salmonella enteritis* is an example of a disease that can be avoided when the poultry's feed and water are clear of rodent droppings.
2. **Use Disinfectants:** When people come to visit your coop, ask them if you can mist the bottom of their shoes with disinfectant. In so doing, you'll be eliminating anything they could carry in on their shoes from their coop to yours. Since almost all soil samples contain coccidia, even a non-fancier could bring a different strain of coccidia into your coop than your birds have been exposed to.
3. **Separate Birds:** If you have birds that free-range, keep them separated from your confined birds. Always work in the free-range pen last, after you've tended to all other pens and cages.
4. **Take Precautions:** When you move from pen to pen or cage to cage to clean out water bowls and the like, use disposable towels and discard after each use. Caged birds should have their own water and feed cups.
5. **Keep Wild Waterfowl Out:** Don't expose your birds to wild birds or wild waterfowl. This is especially true for wild waterfowl, which can carry disease.
6. **Keep Wild Backyard Birds Out:** Don't expose your own poultry to the backyard bird feeder, and don't allow wild birds to nest in your coop.
7. **Separate Old and Young Birds:** Keep your young birds separate from your older birds. At about six months of age, you can begin to co-mingle old and young birds. Natural immunities develop by then that will somewhat protect them against possible carriers in your adult flock.
8. **Fog and/or Spray:** Keep airborne viruses, bacteria, and fungi in check by fogging or spraying your coop at recommended intervals with a product suitable for this purpose. It's best to fog your coop with a product approved for use while the birds are present. Most products cannot be used this way and you must be sure before you begin, whether your birds need to be removed. Your goal should be to disinfect hard surfaces and to knock any airborne pathogens out of the air--and kill them in the process.
9. **Vaccinate:** If you don't already have one, begin a vaccination program to protect your flock from general and region-specific diseases. Check with your state or province's agricultural department before proceeding to ensure that you are following their guidelines for your specific area. Also be sure not to vaccinate your birds with live or modified-live vaccines that have the potential to set up a carrier state in your birds if you plan to show them. Vaccination programs can be a complicated subject and one that you must research before beginning.

## **If You Identify an Illness in Your Flock:**

Quarantine sick birds and feed and water them last on your daily rounds. Even if they're in a separate cage, many viruses are airborne and some travel on feather dander, such as Marek's Disease, which can be transferred by rodents. Any treatment program should be designed around the specific disease the bird is suffering from and research should be done to identify the disease. Broad-spectrum antibiotic use before diagnosis can lead to antibiotic resistance in the future and in some cases, antibiotic treatment when a fungal infection is present can actually make the bird worse.

If a sick bird dies, have a state or university poultry laboratory or a veterinarian perform a necropsy to determine the cause of death. This is valuable information and will help you manage your flock for the future. Most university labs charge a very small fee in comparison to the volume of tests they are willing to run to provide you with this information.