



May 9, 2022
For immediate release

Working together to monitor and reduce spread of avian influenza in wild birds

The Nunatsiavut Government is working with the provincial Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture and Environment and Climate Change Canada to monitor for presence of the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in wild birds.

Wild birds, especially waterfowl, are natural carriers of influenza viruses. They are not always affected by the disease, but can still transmit it to other wild as well as vulnerable domestic birds. On rare occasions, avian influenza viruses, such as HPAI, can cause disease in humans. Careful cleaning practices (washing hands, clothing, equipment, etc.) prevents and reduces the spread of the virus.

As of May 9, 2022 there has been one presumptive positive case of HPAI in an Iceland Gull in Labrador. The Nunatsiavut Government and its partners are continuing to monitor the spread of HPAI.

Any person encountering birds acting strangely (or dead birds) are encouraged to report sightings directly to their respective Nunatsiavut Government conservation officer. Signs that a bird may have HPAI include: nervousness, tremors or lack of coordination, swelling around the head, neck and eyes, lack of energy or movement, coughing, gasping for air or sneezing, diarrhea or sudden death. Members of the public should not handle dead, sick or birds exhibiting strange behavior. If contact with wild birds is unavoidable, wear gloves or use a doubled plastic bag. Wash your hands with soap and warm water after handling.

It is considered safe to hunt, handle, and eat healthy game birds. However, exposure to avian influenza can occur when handling wild birds. There is no evidence to suggest that properly cooked game birds are a source of avian influenza infection for people. Wear gloves when preparing harvested birds. Thoroughly clean contaminated surfaces on tools, work areas, and clothing. Do not eat, drink, or smoke while handling raw or other game products.

To report a sighting, or dead bird, please contact:

Community	Conservation Officer	Telephone
Nain	Simon Kohlmeister	709-922-2942
Hopedale	Ian Winters	709-933-3337
Postville	George Gear	709-479-9763
Makkovik	Errol Andersen	709-923-2365
Rigolet	David Wolfrey	709-947-3383
North West River	Dean McLean	709-497-8725
Happy Valley-Goose Bay	Marty Allen	709-896-8582