



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Public Health Communication
(559) 259-1798 or (559) 974-2302

First Confirmed Human Case of Bird Flu (H5N1) in Fresno County

The Fresno County Department of Public Health (FCDPH), in coordination with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has confirmed its first human case of H5N1 bird flu in a Fresno County resident who had contact with infected cattle at a dairy farm in the Central Valley. This case has reported mild symptoms, is being treated with antiviral medications, and is isolating at home.

The virus was first detected in California in sick dairy cattle in August, and public health officials have been closely monitoring workers for illness at dairy facilities experiencing an outbreak of bird flu among their cattle herds. As of today, there has been no evidence of human-to-human transmissions of the bird flu virus in California.

“Although there is now one confirmed human case of bird flu in Fresno County, the risk to the general public remains low at this time. It is essential for everyone on dairy and poultry farms to take safety precautions and follow all public health recommendations to reduce the risk of further human cases. Protecting the health of our farmworkers is a top priority for the FCDPH as we continue to address bird flu infections in our region.” stated Dr. Trinidad Solis, Deputy County Health Officer for the FCDPH.

People who interact with potentially infected animals are at higher risk of getting bird flu and we continue our efforts to provide personal protective equipment (PPE) for those workers. The FCDPH recommends that PPE, such as respirators (N95 masks), eye protection (face shields or safety goggles), and gloves be worn by anyone working with animals or materials that are infected or potentially infected with the bird flu virus. Wearing PPE helps prevent infection. The FCDPH has been actively working alongside industry partners in distributing PPE for farmworkers and, to date, has distributed approximately 60,000 pieces of PPE to 15 dairies.

Pasteurized milk and dairy products continue to be safe to consume, as pasteurization is fully effective at inactivating the bird flu virus. As an added precaution, and according to longstanding state and federal requirements, milk from sick cows is not permitted in the public milk supply.

People exposed to infected animals should monitor for the following symptoms for 10 days after their last exposure: eye redness (conjunctivitis), cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, diarrhea, vomiting, muscle or body aches, headaches, fatigue, trouble breathing, and fever. If they start to feel sick, they should immediately isolate, notify the FCDPH, and work with public health and healthcare providers to get timely testing and treatment. Exposed workers who develop symptoms can notify the FCDPH at (559) 600-3332.

The FCDPH recommends all residents, especially workers at risk for exposure to bird flu, receive the seasonal flu and COVID-19 vaccine. Although the seasonal flu vaccine will not protect against bird flu, it can decrease the risk of being infected with both viruses at the same time and reduce the chance of severe illness from seasonal flu. The public can go to myturn.ca.gov to find the nearest site offering the seasonal vaccine along other vaccines needed to protect themselves against circulating viruses this fall and winter.

Promotion, preservation and protection of the community's health

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For the latest information on the national bird flu response, see the CDC's [Bird Flu Response Update](#). To report an unusual number of sick livestock or you suspect Bird Flu in your livestock, call the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) at 1-866-922-2473.

For any other information on bird flu or to request PPE for farm owners and organizations supporting farmworkers, please visit the Fresno County bird flu webpage: www.fcdph.org/AvianFlu.

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