

Can Avian Influenza Be Passed in Eggs?

With the recent avian influenza outbreaks in commercial poultry flocks in Minnesota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Iowa, South Dakotans should not be worried about eating eggs, explained Lavonne Meyer, SDSU Extension Food Safety Field Specialist.

"According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the chance of infected poultry or eggs entering the food chain is extremely low due to the many safeguards in place," Meyer said.

She explained that even when avian influenza is not a concern, the FDA has mandatory inspections and testing programs in place to protect the food system and prevent the chance of infected poultry or eggs entering the food chain.

"In addition to these safeguards, hens infected with avian influenza (AI) usually stop laying eggs. This is one of the first signs of illness, even if infected hens would lay a few eggs they generally would not get through washing and grading because the shells are weak and oddly shaped," Meyer said.

If one hen is found to have AI, Meyer explained, the flow of eggs from a facility is stopped at the first suspicion of an outbreak according to FDA regulations. "They do not even wait for a confirmed diagnosis," she said. "Because of this, eggs in the marketplace are unlikely to be contaminated with AI."

Proper cooking prevents avian influenza transmission

In the unlikely chance that poultry meat or eggs from a bird infected with avian influenza does enter the U.S. food system, Meyer reminds consumers, the virus is killed by properly cooking poultry or eggs. "Cooking poultry, eggs and other poultry products to the proper temperature and preventing cross-contamination between raw and cooked food is the key to safety," Meyer said. "You should follow the same handling practices that are recommended to prevent illness from common foodborne pathogens such as Salmonella and Campylobacter."

Proper food handling procedures include:

- * Wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw poultry and eggs.

- * Clean cutting boards and other utensils with soap and hot water to keep raw poultry and eggs from contaminating other foods.

- * Sanitize cutting boards by using a solution of 1 Tablespoon of chlorine bleach and 1 gallon of water.

- * Cook poultry to an internal temperature of at least 165° F.

- * Cook eggs until the yolks and whites are firm. Casseroles and other dishes containing eggs should be cooked to 160° F.

- * If preparing a recipe that calls for eggs that are raw or undercooked when the dish is served, use shell eggs that have been treated to destroy Salmonella by pasteurization or another approved method, or pasteur-

ized egg products.

Avian influenza 101 Since December 2014, USDA has confirmed several cases of avian influenza (AI) in the Pacific, Central and Mississippi bird flyways. More recently, there have been reports of AI in commercial flocks in Minnesota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Iowa. AI is commonly called the "bird flu."

Avian influenza cannot be transmitted through safely handled and properly cooked eggs, chicken or turkey.

As a reminder, all eggs, chicken and turkey should be cooked thoroughly and at the recommended temperatures to reduce the risk of food-borne illnesses.

Additional information

1. What consumers Need to Know About Avian Influenza. Food and Drug Administration. 2006. Archived Content. Accessed on 5-7-15 <http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm085550.htm#eat>

2. Ask Karen Web Portal. How do you handle and store eggs safely?

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Bird Tour Registration Deadline

BROOKINGS, S.D. - The South Dakota Grassland Coalition is organizing the 2015 annual South Dakota Bird Tour; Birds. At Home on the Range, for June 5 and 6, 2015.

"Birds are indicators of rangeland health, and as is the tradition, the Bird Tour will be conducted on a working ranch where participants can experience the interaction of bird conservation, wildlife, and livestock," said Pete Bauman, SDSU Extension Range Field Specialist.

This year's tour is located near Marvin and will be hosted by Abbey Grasslands owner/operator Tracy Rosenberg. Participants will not only have the opportunity to visit this working ranch on the grounds of the historic Blue Cloud Abbey, they will also have the unique opportunity to lodge at the Abbey of the Hills and hear Rosenberg's unique story of transition from an Iowa crop farm to a South Dakota grass-based cattle operation.

This family friendly event will include birding, presentations, social, meals and hands-on fun including bird banding, creek ecology, and kid's activities.

Registration Deadline is May 30, 2015

The cost to attend Birds. At Home on the Range is \$20 per person. Students are free and meals are included. Make checks payable to the South Dakota Grassland Coalition

For planning purposes, registration form and fee must be received by May 30, 2015.

Lodging is on your own. Accommodations include: Abbey of the Hills, 605-398-9200, www.AbbeyOfTheHills.com; or Milbank Super 8 605-432-9288. Mention "Bird Tour" for a special rate. Visit MilbankSD.com for more lodging options.

Additional family recreation available including: swimming, adult/parental supervision required; fishing, - catch and release only. Bring your own equipment.

Inquire at registration.

Direction: From Marvin, travel southeast of town on Hwy 6 approximately 1 mile. Enter Abbey grounds at main sign.


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Processing Mentor Track

In addition to the Home Food Processor Track modules listed above, Module 7: Becoming a Food Preservation Mentor; must be completed if you are interested in becoming a mentor.

Home Food Preservation Mentors are individuals who are willing to reach out to individuals in their community who want to know more about safe home food preservation practices.

Completing these courses is not a commitment to be a recognized mentor; however completing the hands-on training is a requirement to become a mentor.

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To learn more, contact Lavonne Meyer at 605.782.3290 or Joan Hegerfeld-Baker at 605.688.6233.

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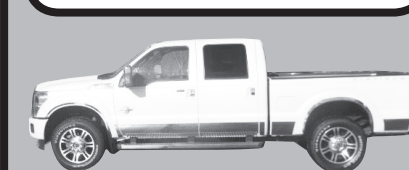












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