

2009 H1N1 Flu Outbreak - Update

From the AVMA: The Oregon state public health veterinarian has reported that a pet cat has died from presumed 2009 H1N1 influenza virus infection. The cat was one of 4 cats in the household and became ill approximately one week after a child in household had a flu-like illness. It developed labored breathing and was presented to a veterinarian on November 4. The cat was not coughing or sneezing but had pneumonia. The cat's condition deteriorated over the next 3 days, and it died on November 7. Samples were obtained and tested (PCR) positive for the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus. Additional samples were sent to the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) for confirmation and are still pending. At this time this is a presumed, not confirmed, case of 2009 H1N1 influenza infection.

The three other cats in the household also became ill with different degrees of sneezing and coughing, but recovered from their illnesses. Samples collected from these cats were negative for the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus.

The AVMA continues to update their 2009 H1N1 influenza resources as soon as they receive and verify information. These resources are available at http://www.avma.org/public_health/influenza/new_virus/default.asp. The AVMA is also in the process of updating our "Frequently Asked Questions" document for veterinarians to include additional information about sampling and testing procedures, and anticipate the updated document will be posted within the next 24 hours. The document is linked from the H1N1 page or at http://www.avma.org/public_health/influenza/new_virus/new_flu_virus_faqs_veterinarians.asp.

The messages to pet owners remain the same.

- This is not cause for panic, but underscores the importance of taking pets to a veterinarian if they are showing signs of illness.
- This is especially important if someone in the household has recently been ill with flu-like symptoms. Ferret and cat owners should remain vigilant.
- To date, all of the sick pets became ill after a person in the household was ill with flu-like symptoms. There is no evidence to suggest that pets have or will spread the virus to humans or other animals.
- Proper hygiene and sanitation measures should be followed to limit the spread of the influenza virus.

If you have any questions about these resources, or if you have information or news to share, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Kimberly May at (847) 285-6667 or kmay@avma.org.

Thousands of Hogs Found Dead: Foul Play Suspected

KTIV-TV (Iowa) - courtesy AVMA

(NEAR HULL, Iowa) - Authorities are investigating the suffocation death of nearly 4,000 hogs in rural Hull, Iowa.

Authorities say the airflow system inside their confinement was tampered with and don't believe it was an accident. [Read the entire story...](#)

Ohio Voters FPass Issue 2 to create Livestock Board

Almost two-thirds of Ohio voters cast a ballot in favor of a state constitutional provision by ballot initiative to establish a 13-member Livestock Care Standards Board that will set standards for the care, treatment and welfare of livestock and poultry raised in Ohio. The director of the state agriculture department will serve as board chair. In addition to the chair, the board will be made up

of 10 members appointed by the governor, and legislative leaders will appoint the other two members. The Board will include the State Veterinarian, one additional licensed veterinarian, farmers, food safety experts, a representative of a county humane society and consumers. No more than seven members appointed at any given time can be of the same political party.

Agriculture industry leaders mostly supported the measure, hoping to thwart an attempt by animal rights activists who are attempting to outlaw intensive confinement of laying hens, breeding sows and veal calves. These activists are targeting primarily the 24 states that allow ballot initiatives. Voters in California, Florida and Arizona have approved such ballot measures, while lawmakers in Colorado, Maine, Michigan and Oregon adopted similar legislation. Issue 2 may serve as a blueprint for other states to avoid such laws being imposed. "We've tried to model this in a way that other states can look at it," said Jack Fisher, executive vice president of the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation. "This involves farmers, ranchers, everyone in the food chain."

The Humane Society of the United States has indicated that it will likely pursue a future Ohio ballot campaign to ban housing systems that use cages for farm animals, which legal experts say would be valid as a subsequent constitutional amendment.

About the Photo

Okay, it is time for me to get in the seasonal mood. I hope you have a Happy Thanksgiving!

A native of North America, the [Wild Turkey](#) is one of only two domesticated birds originating in the New World. The Muscovy Duck is the other.

The Wild Turkey is a large, dark, ground-dwelling bird. It has long, powerful legs and a large, fan-shaped tail. Its head and neck are bare and its bill is short and slightly de-curved. The male has breast feathers tipped with black. Its head and neck are blue-gray with pink wattles. During spring breeding displays, its forehead becomes white, its face bright blue, and its neck scarlet. The male also has spurs on legs and long beard that gets longer with age.

The female's breast feathers are tipped with brown, gray, or white. Its head has small feathers and its beard is very small (if present at all).

European explorers took Wild Turkeys to Europe from Mexico in the early 1500s. They were so successfully domesticated in Europe that English colonists brought them back with them when they settled on the Atlantic Coast. The domestic form has retained the white tail tip of the original Mexican subspecies, and that character can be used to distinguish wandering barnyard birds from wild turkeys which have chestnut-brown tail tips.

The male Wild Turkey provides no parental care. When the eggs hatch, the chicks follow the female. She feeds them for a few days, but they quickly learn to feed themselves. Several hens and their broods may join up into bands of more than 30 birds. Winter groups have been seen to exceed 200.

The Wild Turkey was a very important food animal to Native Americans, but it was eliminated from much of its range by the early 1900s. Introduction programs have successfully established it in most of its original range, and even into areas where it never occurred before.

Attempts to use game farm turkeys for reintroduction programs failed. In the 1940s wild birds were caught and transported to new areas, where they quickly became established and flourished. Such transplantations have been responsible for the spread of the Wild Turkey to 49 states. (Alaska is the only U.S. state without turkeys.)

I photographed this male Wild Turkey in Mason County, IL.

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