

STATE OF MARYLAND

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

ORDER OF: * **ORDER # AH 01-2025**
THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE * **AUTHORITY: Agriculture**
Article, §§ 3-101 et seq.,
TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF * **Annotated Code of Maryland**
ANIMAL DISEASES IN THIS STATE * **EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/8/2025**

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CONTROL ORDER OF THE SECRETARY
REQUIRING SPECIFIC HANDLING, TRANSPORT, AND STORAGE OF
POULTRY LITTER DUE TO HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA

WHEREAS, pursuant to Title 3, Subtitle 1 of the Agriculture Article, the Secretary of Agriculture is responsible for protecting “the health of domestic animals of the State from all contagious and infectious diseases” and to prevent the spread of such diseases may: (a) “enforce ... sanitary, or other rules ... he deems necessary (Md. Agric. Art., § 3-101); and (b) [i]ssue any order he deems necessary or expedient to prevent the communication of any infectious or contagious disease” (Md. Agric. Art., § 3-105);

WHEREAS, Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), a contagious and infectious animal disease, has posed and continues to pose a threat to poultry and other birds in this State and in surrounding states;

WHEREAS, HPAI has been and continues to be detected in the wild bird population in this State and in surrounding states along the Atlantic Flyway;

WHEREAS, following the announcement of a presumptive positive H5 avian influenza in snow geese in Sussex County, Delaware, the Delaware Department of Agriculture confirmed HPAI on a Kent County, Delaware farm with early indications that the virus is the D1.1 genotype found in wild birds;

Whereas, snow geese are migrating birds and are found not only in coastal areas but also in more inland areas, foraging on farm fields, in this State and in surrounding states;

WHEREAS, the Secretary of Agriculture has determined that HPAI poses a high threat to poultry and other birds in this State and that, to reduce this threat, certain steps relating to the handling, storage, and transportation of poultry litter need to be immediately taken;

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to Agriculture Article, §§ 3-101 *et seq.*, Annotated Code of Maryland, the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Agriculture, on this 8th day of January, 2025, hereby Orders:

A. Terms defined. For the purposes of this Order, the following terms have the meanings indicated:

(1) “Avian influenza” means an infection or disease of poultry caused by viruses in the family Orthomyxoviridae, genus Influenza virus A.

(2) “Department” means the Maryland Department of Agriculture or MDA.

(3) “Eastern Shore Counties” means the following nine Maryland counties: (a) Caroline County; (b) Cecil County; (c) Dorchester County; (d) Kent County; (e) Queen Annes County; (f) Somerset County; (g) Talbot County; (h) Wicomico County; and (i) Worcester County.

(4) “Receiving Operation” means a farm that receives poultry litter from a Sending Operation.

(5) “Sending Operation” means a commercial poultry operation from which poultry litter is sent to another farm operation.

B. Scope and Duration. This Order encompasses the Eastern Shore Counties of Maryland and is in effect for 30 days. It may be renewed dependent on the status of HPAI in this State.

C. Poultry Litter Requirements beginning January 8, 2025.

1) Storage/Stockpiling Requirements. Beginning January 8, 2025, a person operating a commercial poultry operation shall ensure that all poultry litter generated from the operation that is to remain on the farm is:

- (a) Placed and maintained in a covered manure storage structure on the farm; or
- (b) Stockpiled and covered in a field on the farm to prevent wild birds and other animals from gaining access to the litter.

2) Movement of Litter.

(a) Beginning January 8, 2025, a person transporting litter from a sending operation to a receiving operation shall ensure that all conveyances are cleaned and disinfected before entering and leaving the sending operation.

(b) Beginning January 8, 2025, a person receiving litter from a sending operation shall ensure that the litter is:

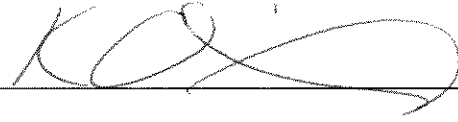
- (i) Placed and maintained in a covered manure storage structure on the farm; or
- (ii) Stockpiled and covered in a field on the farm to prevent wild birds and other animals from gaining access to the litter.

D. Violations. A person who violates this Order is subject to criminal and administrative penalties as provided under Maryland State law.

E. Contact Person. If a person affected by this Order has questions, the person may contact the Office of the State Veterinarian at (410) 841-5810.

1-8-25

Date



Kevin Atticks
Secretary of Agriculture
Maryland Department of Agriculture
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
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