

Shoot biosecurity – Avian Influenza (AI)

HELP PROTECT YOUR BIRDS FROM THE RISK OF BIRD FLU

Bird flu is HIGHLY contagious and can survive for very long periods on surfaces, vehicles, and clothes, in feathers and in infected carcasses.

Beaters, loaders, pickers up, deer stalkers, etc and even dogs that go from shoot to shoot present a significant risk to each shoot. Guns perhaps less so unless they assist in collecting the game.

If any person/dog that encounters a site with dead wild birds / game and/or has been in a restricted AI zone should NOT visit any other shoot for a minimum 72 hours. All clothing, footwear, vehicles and equipment should be thoroughly washed and disinfected.

Keep a visitors' book, and detail contact with birds within the last 72 hours. EVERYONE on site needs to sign the book. Restrict access by non-essential visitors and dogs.

PEOPLE AND VEHICLES

- Anyone attending a shoot should follow good personal biosecurity and should regularly cleanse and disinfect clothing, footwear and vehicles – this is particularly important if they have any contact with game birds, poultry or other captive birds.
- Use **Foot dips** at entrances to each site and at congregation points between drives containing **DEFRA approved disinfectant products**.
- Footbaths should have a lid to prevent rainwater diluting the disinfectant and the contents should be regularly replaced with fresh material (maximum every 3 days). Supply a brush to ensure footwear is properly cleansed and disinfected.
- All **vehicles** should be clean on arrival and regularly washed, including trailers (people carriers such as beaters' and guns' trailers and game cart). Spray wheels and wheel arches upon entry and when leaving the site.

GUN DOGS

Do not feed uncooked shot or culled birds to dogs or allow them to eat dead wild birds. Well cooked birds can be safely consumed by humans and animals alike. Dogs are known to have contracted certain strains of flu and may act as an intermediate host. H5N1 has been shown experimentally to replicate in dogs and shed virus so dogs who have been working on known infected sites should not be then worked on other shoots.

HANDLING GAME

Clean and disinfect the game larder and vehicle and containers used to transport dead game routinely with an approved DEFRA (or FSA) disinfectant. Don't forget to clean the wheels, under wheel arches, and foot wells in the vehicle.

OTHER MEASURES

- Discourage wildfowl and sea birds from mixing with game where possible and legal.
- Game should be fed away from wetlands and water. Minimise the chance of other wild birds accessing their feed by feeding in covered feeders.
- Use a water sanitiser in the drinking water.
- Try to limit feed spillages and clean up spilt feed. Store feed indoors away from wild birds.
- Dead wild birds or game should be disposed of appropriately
- If you keep poultry or other birds, wash your hands and clean and disinfect your footwear as a minimum before tending to your birds. Ideally have separate equipment and personal protective equipment at each locations.

While these recommendations cannot guarantee infection will be prevented, they should go a long way towards reducing the risk.

Find the latest updates and more information about the disease on the government's website <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu>

