



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DIVISION OF EPIDEMIOLOGY, ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH  
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Commissioner

April 2014

Dear Feed Store Owners, Managers, and Employees:

**Preventing Human *Salmonella* Infections Linked to Contact with Live Poultry**

*The purpose of this letter is to provide feed stores with information and resources on the risk of human Salmonella infections from contact with live poultry including chicks, chickens, ducklings, ducks, geese, and turkeys. Please distribute this letter to employees involved with live poultry sales.*

People in contact with poultry can become infected with a germ called *Salmonella*. This germ can contaminate a bird's body and anything in the area where poultry is displayed or housed. In recent years, many outbreaks of salmonella infection have been linked to handling live poultry from agricultural feed stores and mail-order hatcheries resulting in thousands of illnesses, hundreds of hospitalizations, and several deaths.

Poultry can carry *Salmonella* germs and still appear healthy and clean; therefore, it is important for feed store employees to help protect themselves and their customers:

- Circulate the enclosed educational flyer on safe handling of live poultry to all customers purchasing live poultry. These flyers can also be distributed through your website.
- Place educational posters in clear view near areas where birds are displayed.
- Provide hand washing stations or hand sanitizer near poultry display areas and encourage customers to sanitize their hands immediately after leaving the poultry display area.
- Display birds out of reach of customers, especially children, to limit potential infection.
- Clean and disinfect bird display enclosures between shipments of birds to prevent the spread of disease.
- Follow the rules and regulations noted below pertaining to the sale of baby chicks.

These steps can be found in the **Compendium of Measures to Prevent Disease Associated with Animals in Public Settings, 2013**:

<http://nasphv.org/Documents/AnimalContactCompendium2013.pdf>

Please note, in order to offer baby chicks for sale, New Jersey Law (N.J.S.A. 4:3-12) requires sellers to obtain a permit issued by the Secretary of Agriculture. In addition, all baby chicks shall originate from flocks classified as pullorum-typhoid clean under the National Poultry Improvement Plan (N.J.A.C. 2:3-7.2) and be accompanied by a Veterinary Services (VS) Form 9-3 or Certificate of Veterinary Inspection. (N.J.A.C. 2:3-1.9.(e) 1.)

Furthermore, N.J.S.A. 4:22-26 prohibits the sale, distribution or displaying of live chicks, ducklings, and other fowl under two months of age for use as household or domestic pets and prohibits the sale, distribution or displaying of fowl that have been dyed or artificially colored.

Poultry must be treated in compliance with New Jersey Administrative Code 2:8 commonly referred to as the Humane Standards of Care, for Livestock and Poultry. These regulations are available on the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) website:  
<http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/ah/pdf/HumaneStandards2010.pdf>

Everyone associated with live poultry is encouraged to remain vigilant for potential cases of disease or any suspicious or unusual conditions. In the event of such observations, please contact the NJDA Division of Animal Health (609-671-6400) or the USDA Veterinary Services office (609-259-5260) IMMEDIATELY.

Feed stores can play an important role in educating the public on how to safely enjoy their backyard poultry. Thank you for your help in sharing these messages with your customers, employees and your community.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Dr. Colin T. Campbell  
State Public Health Veterinarian



Manoel Tamassia, DVM, MS, PhD  
New Jersey Department of Agriculture  
Director, Division of Animal Health  
State Veterinarian

## Resources:

- **Free Educational Flyers and Posters**
  - CDC-NPIP Safe handling of live poultry poster
    - Available in multiple languages and sizes:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/resources/posters.htm#poultry>
  - Have a Backyard Flock? Don't Wing It.
    - <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/resources/posters.htm#backyard-flock>
  - Don't Play Chicken with Your Health.
    - <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/resources/posters.htm#chicken>
- **Web Buttons - Tips to Stay Healthy Around Backyard Poultry Flocks**
  - Web buttons can be added to websites and act as links back to CDC web pages
    - <http://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/tools/buttons/diseaseandconditions/index.html>
- **Informational Features**
  - **Keeping Backyard Poultry**
    - <http://www.cdc.gov/features/salmonellapoultry/>
  - **Risk of Human *Salmonella* Infections from Live Baby Poultry**
    - <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/SalmonellaBabyBirds/>
- Find additional resources on CDC's Gastrointestinal (Enteric) Zoonoses website:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/zoonotic/qi/>
- New Jersey Department of Agriculture, Division of Animal Health:  
<http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/ah/>
- New Jersey Department of Health, Communicable Disease Service:  
<http://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/salmonel/index.shtml>