



**INDUSTRY INFORMATION**

**2024 CHEP Summer Meeting – Office Closure:**

Please note that our office will be closed from Monday, July 8 to Wednesday, July 10, and will reopen on Thursday, July 11. If you have an urgent matter, please email us as we will be monitoring emails while away.

**2024 September Producer Meeting – Save the Date:**

Mark your calendar! We will be hosting an in-person Producer Meeting in our office on September 26, 2024, from 7:00 to 9:00 PM.

**Less than 5-Year Producer Club:**

We are organizing an informative session for producers with less than five years of experience. If you're interested in attending, please let us know. Once we have enough participants, we will announce the date and time. For more information, or to sign up, please contact Michaela ([admin@bcbhec.com](mailto:admin@bcbhec.com)).

**Avian Metapneumovirus (aMPV) Update:**

The aMPV is a highly virulent virus causing respiratory and secondary infections in birds, leading to 4-5% mortality in broiler breeders. Efforts are underway to fast-track vaccine approval and increase provincial lab testing capacity. For more details, check the attached information sheet.

**Webinar Overview: Transitioning Beyond the 2022-23 HPAI Outbreak:**

Visit our [website](#) for the full presentation. This webinar covered the conclusion of the 2022-23 HPAI outbreak and key topics for 2024. It includes updates on the national outbreak investigation, an overview of BC's 4<sup>th</sup> Wave of HPAI, a resource update from AgSafe BC, and a Q&A session with presenters.

**Stay Informed:**

Check our [website](#) frequently for the latest updates on webinars and valuable guides. Find essential resources and presentations on important industry topics to keep yourself ahead in your field.

**PRICING**

Pricing Orders				
Period	Live Chicken	Hatching Eggs	Saleable Chicks	Day-Old Broiler Chicks
A-186	2.212 \$/kg	743.56 ¢/doz	77.45 ¢/chick	99.45 ¢/chick
A-187	2.2445 \$/kg	717.62 ¢/doz	74.75 ¢/chick	96.75 ¢/chick
A-188	2.2073 \$/kg	725.50 ¢/doz	75.57 ¢/chick	97.57 ¢/chick
A-189	2.1704 \$/kg	717.44 ¢/doz	74.73 ¢/chick	96.73 ¢/chick
A-190	2.1678 \$/kg	722.78 ¢/doz	75.29 ¢/chick	97.29 ¢/chick

**PRODUCTION**

**Year-To-Date Hatchability:**

81.99%

**Average Lay Cycle End:**

59.7 Weeks

**Lay Cycle Length:**

Please continue to keep flock fertility up with the extended lay cycle length.

Production Cycles		
Period	Start Date	End Date
A-186	Nov 19, 2023	Jan 13, 2024
A-187	Jan 14, 2024	Mar 9, 2024
A-188	Mar 10, 2024	May 4, 2024
A-189	May 5, 2024	Jun 29, 2024
A-190	Jun 30, 2024	Aug 25, 2024

**Placement Date / Number Changes:** Production staff want to note that increasing placeable hens or changing placement dates can be challenging and usually must be done at least six months out (currently into January 2025).

**Placements for Second Year of Quota Cycle:**

On June 28, 2024, the production and on-farm team distributed a memo on your maximum utilization capacity under ACP, your current barn specifications, and an updated Quota & Placement sheet for this cycle. If you have any question or concerns, please contact staff.

## ON-FARM

### 2024 Audit Stats

Total Premises to Audit: 54  
Premises Completed: 22/54

### Hatching Egg Tip

A valuable [article](#) on Staphylococcus infections in breeding stock.

### Biosecurity Status: YELLOW

Industry is to function under the yellow status of biosecurity. The yellow biosecurity status is attached.

### HPAI Detections in BC - Wildlife and Environmental Surveillance:

HPAI surveillance dashboard is available [here](#).

### Yellow Alert Notification:

Please see attached the BC Poultry Association (BCPA) recommendation. The Commission has confirmed that producers can now return to yellow biosecurity status. This status requires daily adherence to the measures outlined in the BC Biosecurity Program to prevent the introduction and spread of disease.

### HPAI H5N1 Investigation Report:

We are pleased to share the attached report, "An investigation of HPAI H5N1 in BC, Fall 2023 – A Synopsis".

### Lifting of General Order AIV 2023-03:

Effective June 5, 2024, General order AIV 2023-03 is lifted. All registered quota holding poultry premises have been notified. Continue strict biosecurity to prevent avian influenza. Report suspected bird flu to your vet, CFIA, or BC Animal Health Centre at [1-800-661-9903](tel:1-800-661-9903).

### Dead Bird Surveillance (DBS) Questionnaire:

An email was sent on June 27<sup>th</sup> requesting participation in a DBS questionnaire. Thank you to those who have already completed the survey. Due to the positive feedback of the form being easy to use, we are extending the deadline for responses to July 11<sup>th</sup>. Following the deadline, producers who have not completed the questionnaire or are unable to, will receive a phone call from staff to obtain the necessary information. If you have not yet completed the questionnaire, please click [here](#).

### On-Farm Program Summer Student:

Please welcome Allie Janzen, our new On-Farm Program Summer Student. Allie will be conducting farm visits independently and alongside Amy. Allie is a second-year business student at Trinity Western University, specializing in marketing and finance. She has extensive poultry experience on her family's layer and broiler farm. This summer, Allie looks forward to learning about the hatching egg industry and meeting producers on the farm.

### Updated Spiking Male Registrations:

Spiking Male Registration Forms have been updated and are accessible on the producer's side of the [website](#). Please ensure the correct forms are being used according to the present Biosecurity Status and the proper protocols are adhered to during transfer.

### Salmonella Enteritidis FAQ:

The Salmonella Enteritidis FAQ has been updated with informational flow charts on testing frequency and can be found on the producer's side of the [website](#).

### CHEP Agriskills Course:

A reminder that CHEP offers a comprehensive online modular course on Broiler Breeder production. Based on real-world best practices used on farms across Canada, this simple, practical training package ensures that even the busiest farms can successfully train their workers quickly and with no down-time. Please contact Kaitlyn ([kaitlyn@bcbhec.com](mailto:kaitlyn@bcbhec.com)) to register you or your employees.





# Save the Date!

## Producer Meeting

Date: September 26, 2024

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: 1848 McCallum Rd Unit 210, Abbotsford,  
BC V2S 0H9

Please RSVP with [admin@bcbhec.com](mailto:admin@bcbhec.com).



## Avian Metapneumovirus (aMPV)

### Background

Avian metapneumovirus (aMPV), known as swollen head syndrome in chickens, is a highly contagious upper respiratory tract infection. Infection with this virus can lead to secondary infections including bacteria (*E. coli*, ORT, *Pasteurella spp.*, *B. avium*, *R. anatipestifer*), mycoplasma (MG), aspergillosis, and viruses (e.g. IBV) resulting in potential development of airsacculitis and pneumonia. The mortality rate of aMPV depends on virulence of virus strain, species, age of birds, breeding conditions, immune status, and secondary infections.

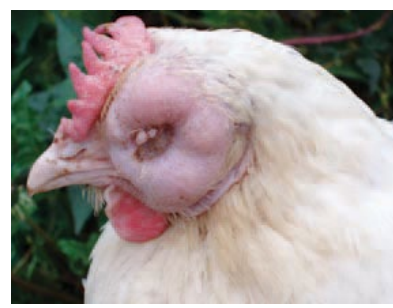
### Transmission

Clinically healthy wild birds are considered a reservoir for this aMPV (waterfowl, sparrows, swallows, pigeons, falcons etc.). Wild birds and game birds have been found to be seropositive in Ontario. The most common transmission route is through aerosol or direct contact of respiratory secretions on people or contaminated equipment. To date, there is no clear evidence of vertical transmission from breeders to offspring.

The virus has an incubation period of 3-7 days wherein it will spread rapidly within and between flocks. Birds shed the virus for only a few days and there is no latency or carrier state. However, there are species differences in the onset and development of lesions. Unfortunately, clinical signs and lesions are non-specific.

### Clinical Signs

- Sneezing, coughing, rales, and conjunctivitis
- Discoloration
- Swelling of the head (periorbital and infraorbital sinuses)
- Nervous signs such as torticollis, also known as wry neck, crook neck, or stargazing
- Decreased egg production and egg quality



Source: [The Poultry Site](#)

**If your flock is showing clinical signs of respiratory disease, contact your veterinarian.**

## Heightened Biosecurity “Yellow”

These measures are above mandatory standards and should be applied when there is a heightened disease risk or other threats in your region within BC.<sup>1</sup>

### Controlled Access Zone (CAZ)

- CAZ barrier should be closed at all times
- Restrict CAZ access to all unnecessary vehicles
- Establish a parking area outside of your CAZ
- Implement an “Essential Visitors Only” policy
- Minimize contact with all other avian (bird) and porcine (swine) species
- Minimize contact with all other poultry operations
- No mortalities and cull eggs to leave premise except on recommendation of a governing body (i.e. board/commission, veterinary, CFIA etc.)

### Restricted Access Zone (RAZ)

- Keep doors locked at all times when the building is not occupied by personnel
- Closely monitor flock health for unusual changes in feed and water consumption, increased mortality, and unusual behaviour. Report any of the above to your Veterinarian and commodity board
- Clean and disinfect traffic area and access points after each egg pick up
- Minimize contact between commercial poultry and wild birds & wild bird droppings

### Equipment

- All equipment and materials related to the production of poultry that enter or leave the CAZ, regardless of size or use, must be clean and disinfected

<sup>1</sup> These are not all of the BC Biosecurity Program requirements; please refer to your producer manual for more information. Note if your commodities On-Farm Food Safety Program requires more stringent biosecurity measures please follow them instead. The measures above are minimum requirements.

### Testing

Diagnostic testing of aMPV can be challenging as the virus is cleared quickly from the birds. The virus may only be detectable for 6-7 days post-infection. Once clinical signs are recognized, the virus may be undetectable by PCR alone, so combining PCR with ELISA antibody testing can aide in diagnosing and tracking the disease.

### Reporting

Avian metapneumovirus is an immediately notifiable disease to CFIA. The laboratories are required to contact CFIA if there is a suspicion or diagnosis of the disease. Currently, CFIA takes no action in response to aMPV detection.

Provincial reporting depends on the province. The Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS) tool to search for diseases and their status – available online [here](#).

### Treatment and Prevention

There is no treatment for an aMPV infection, so focus should be on prevention. Preventative measures include biosecurity, good barn management (i.e., ventilation, temperature, maintaining good litter quality, not overcrowding). This virus is sensitive to multiple disinfectants (quaternary ammonium, bleach, etc.). It is stable at pH 3.0 – 9.0 and inactivated at 56°C for 30 minutes. However, it has longer survival times (i.e., weeks) at lower temperatures, which could explain some seasonal patterns.

No vaccines are currently available for use in Canada or the United States of America. However, live and inactivated vaccines are available in countries where the disease is endemic (e.g., Europe).

### References

- [www.oahn.ca/news/avian-metapneumovirus-ampv-detected-in-ontario/](http://www.oahn.ca/news/avian-metapneumovirus-ampv-detected-in-ontario/)
- <https://www.thepoultrysite.com/publications/diseases-of-poultry/197/swollen-head-syndrome>
- Rautenschlein S. Avian Metapneumovirus. In: Swayne DE, ed. Diseases of Poultry, 14<sup>th</sup>, Vol I. Wiley Blackwell, 2020:135-143.
- Jones RC, Rautenschlein S. Avian Metapneumovirus. In: Swayne DE, ed. Diseases of Poultry, 13<sup>th</sup>, Wiley Blackwell, 2013:112-119.
- Kaboudi K, Lachheb J. Avian metapneumovirus infection in turkeys: a review on turkey rhinotracheitis. J Appl Poult Res 2021;30:100211. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.japr.2021.100211>

# An Investigation of HPAI H5N1 in BC, Fall 2023 – A Synopsis

## Objectives:

The purpose of this investigation was to understand the genomic, spatiotemporal, and epidemiological trends from the fall 2023 ‘wave’ of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreak in poultry and wild birds in BC. The findings from this investigation can be used to develop and prioritize HPAI monitoring and mitigation activities being conducted by the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the BC poultry industry and to identify knowledge gaps that can guide future investigations.

## Outbreak Summary:

The third ‘wave’ of HPAI H5N1 in BC occurred from October 20, 2023, to January 22, 2024. During this period, a total of 54 poultry farms were infected (Infected Premises [IPs] 105-158). A total of 134 HPAI-infected wild birds were detected between September and December 2023. The majority of these infected wild birds and poultry farms were concentrated in the Fraser Valley.

## Analytical Focus and Genomic Evolution:

The genetic sequence of HPAI viruses can be determined in laboratories, and then used to understand how HPAI viruses isolated from different individual animals or groups of animals (e.g. flocks) are related to one another, and therefore what transmission networks are most likely. HPAI sequence data is initially used to understand big picture relationships, and subsequently investigated in more detail to explore linkages between more closely related viruses.

For this investigation, HPAI viruses from poultry and wild birds isolated in BC between October, 2023 and January, 2024 were sequenced<sup>1</sup>, and sequences were compared to determine how viruses from different sources were related to each other. Groups of related viruses were categorized into ‘genomic clusters’. In the fall 2023 ‘wave’, wild birds and poultry were infected with viruses belonging to three distinct HPAI H5N1 genomic clusters: Cluster 3A-NP-A (9 poultry farms and 24 wild birds), Cluster 3A-NP-B (38 poultry farms and 26 wild birds), and Cluster 6A (7 poultry farms and 24 wild birds) (Figure 1).

Only poultry and wild birds within the same genomic cluster could have transmitted HPAI to one another. Therefore, within each genomic cluster, potential connections among farms and wildlife were assessed using detailed sequence data, detection dates, locations, and ownership details for farms.

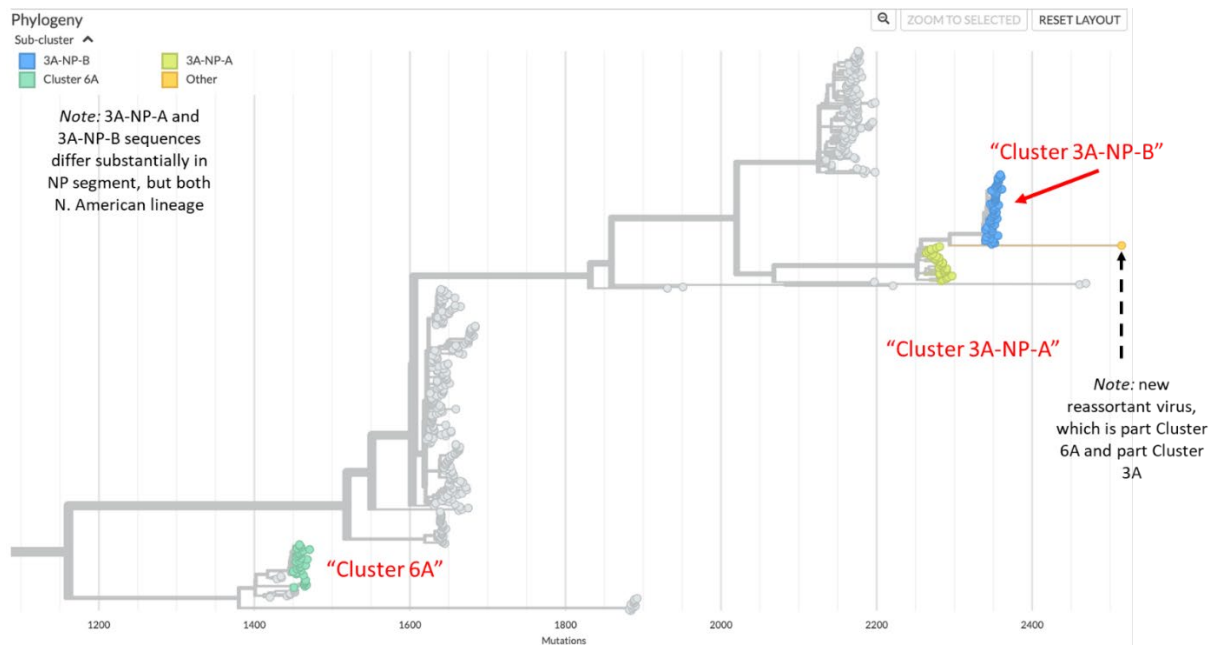


Figure 1 - Two genomic clusters were detected in wild birds and poultry in Wave 3 of the HPAI H5N1 – Cluster 6A and 3A. Cluster 3A was further divided into two subclusters (3A-NP-A and 3A-NP-B) based on two distinct reassortments of the NP gene.

## HPAI H5N1 Wave 3 Transmission Investigation – Key Findings:

Due to producer confidentiality, this synopsis does not include any specific IP information ; rather, a high-level example is used to illustrate the major findings relevant to the transmission network.

<sup>1</sup> HPAI viruses from domestic poultry were sequenced at the CFIA NCFAD laboratory, and HPAI viruses from wildlife were sequenced at the BCCDC laboratory.



Within genomic clusters 3A-NP-A and 3A-NP-B, there were at least seven groups of farms, encompassing a total of 35 of the 47 total IPs, that showed strong genetic, geographic, and temporal evidence of local transmission or farm-to-farm spread. The remaining ten farms appeared to be independent incursions.

Within Cluster 3A-NP-B specifically, there were a total of 38 poultry farms and 26 wild birds (Figure 2). Of the 38 farms, there were 28 farms that could be clearly grouped into one of five groups based on strong genetic, geographic, and temporal evidence. This finding is supportive for local and/or farm-to-farm spread within each group (Figure 3).

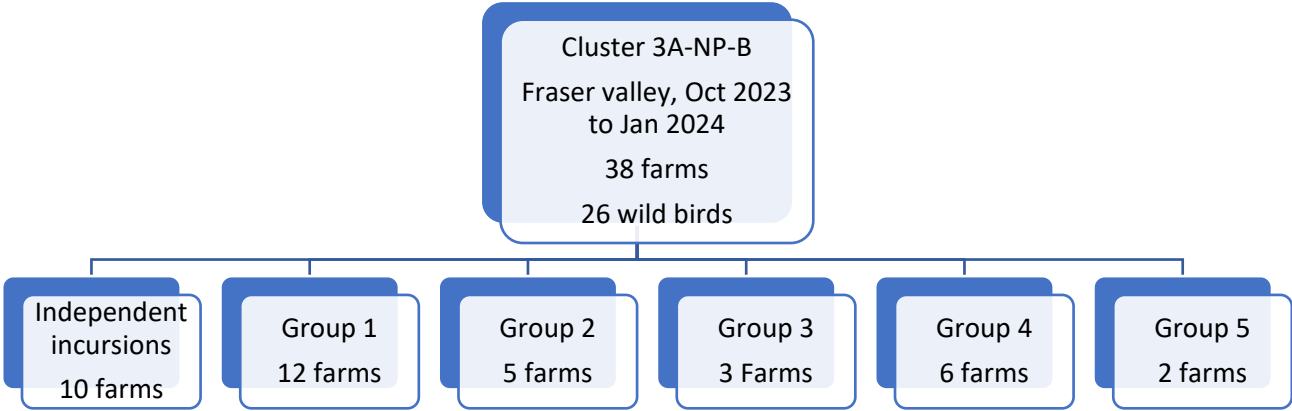


Figure 2 – Details of number of farms in each genetic-geographic- temporal group in cluster 3A-NP-B.

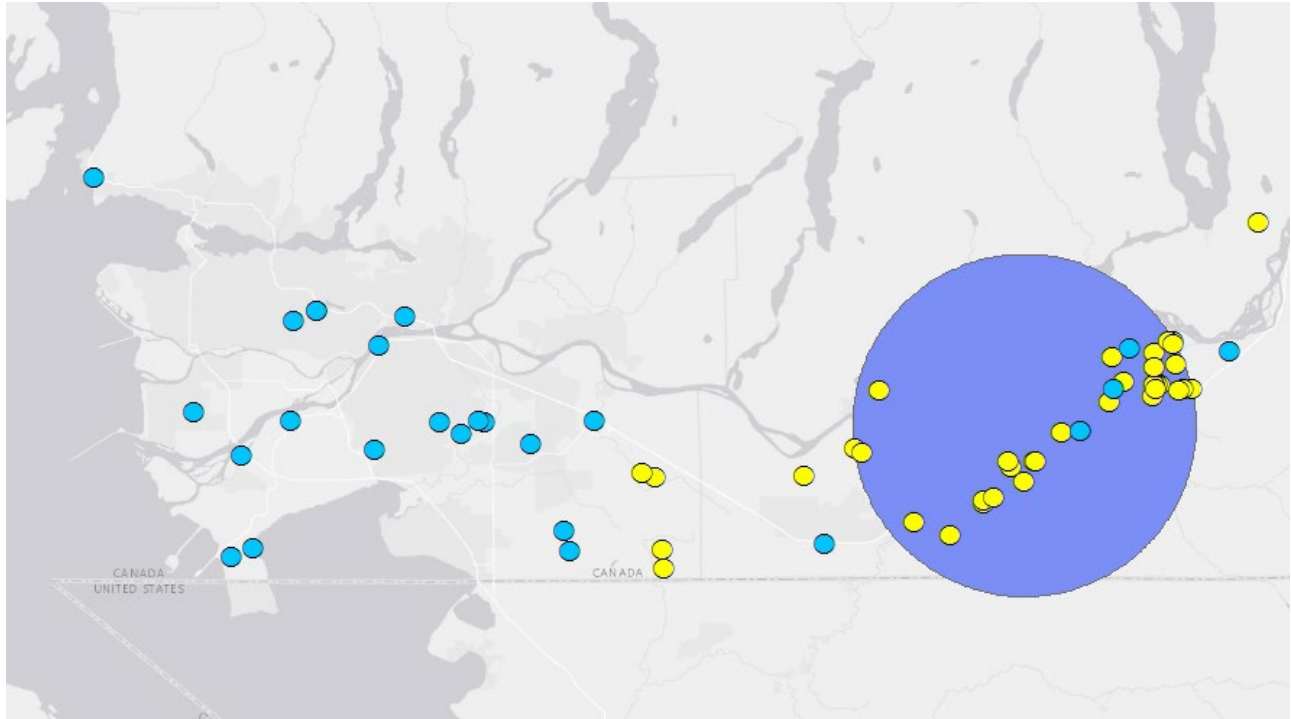


Figure 3 - Geographic distribution of wild birds (blue) and poultry farms (yellow) infected with Cluster 3A-NP-B with statistically significant geographic cluster of infected farms (large circle).

## Full Report and Next Steps:

The full descriptive epidemiology report provides comprehensive genomic, temporal, and spatial analyses for each wild bird and IP. Since the report includes potentially identifying information, sharing the full report will require affected producers to provide consent. If all producers in a cluster consent, there is an opportunity to share the identity of farms within a cluster with all producers in that cluster, allowing them to further consider potential avenues of farm-to-farm transmission. Distribution of the report and associate information would be strictly limited to producers, producer associations, marketing boards and government agencies involved in the response, with the explicit goal of working collaboratively to reduce the risk of transmission, protect flock health and a stable supply chain.

This analysis was completed independently and in parallel with the CFIA analysis. Findings have not been validated by the CFIA in its role as competent veterinary authority for Canada. We will continue to work closely with the CFIA on epidemiological investigations and reports.

For more information, please contact the Office of Chief Veterinarian. [Chief.Veterinarian@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Chief.Veterinarian@gov.bc.ca)