

Avian influenza detected on two farms in Victoria

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Agriculture Victoria has confirmed that there has been a second egg farm in Victoria impacted by avian influenza (AI). The farm has been quarantined and movement controls have been introduced to prevent further spread.

Avian influenza, otherwise known as ‘bird flu’ or ‘AI’, is a type of influenza virus that can cause high numbers of deaths in birds. The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services has confirmed that this strain of AI is not a risk to the public as it rarely affects humans unless there is direct and close contact with sick birds.

The egg industry is working with authorities to eradicate the virus with increased biosecurity protocols being implemented on all nearby properties to assist with containment. Eggs remain safe to eat and supply remains steady.

“With avian influenza present in wild birds in Australia, these incidents happen periodically and can have a devastating impact on the farms involved which are good farming operations”, Australian Eggs Managing Director, Rowan McMonnies said.

“This incident comes at a difficult time with COVID-19 impacting Victoria. The farms involved form a relatively small part of our national egg production which provides 17.2 millions eggs to Australians every

day.

“Fortunately, egg farms are not impacted by the Stage 4 restrictions in Victoria and production across the industry has remained steady since March.

“Australian consumers should take comfort that eggs remain safe to eat and egg farmers will be working hard during this difficult time to ensure there are eggs on shelves.”

Key Points About Avian Influenza:

- Avian influenza and human influenza are different diseases.
- Transfer of Avian influenza from birds to humans is very low, and cannot be transmitted through the consumption of eggs.
- There is little risk of people in Australia being affected by avian influenza through normal contact with birds.

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