

PUBLIC NOTICE

AVIAN INFLUENZA 2025

Kuujjuaq, April 9, 2025 – The avian flu has been spreading among wild birds and mammals throughout Québec since April 2022. In Nunavik, two cases involving geese were detected in the fall of 2023 and a case involving a ringed seal was also reported by Nunavut authorities in December 2024.

Geese and ducks are known to be impacted by this disease. Given that the hunting season is underway, as is the spring migration, the NRBHSS asks the Nunavik population to exercise caution and avoid hunting or eating wild animals that appear sick.

Also, while the virus mostly circulates among birds, it can sometimes be transmitted to other mammals, including sea-based mammals, who are in close contact with sick birds.

The risk of the avian flu being transmitted to humans by wild birds or mammals is nonetheless very low. This being said, we recommend that hunters and other people who handle birds and animals adhere to the following basic measures designed to limit the risk of disease and virus propagation: wearing gloves, washing one's hands with soap and hot water, washing one's clothing and cleaning all equipment used.

Eating game meat that has been properly cooked is safe and does not constitute a risk of infection for humans.

Refrain from touching any sick or dead birds or animals you may come across. You can report any such situation to Noah Brosseau at the Nunavik Research Centre (819 964-2925, ext. 231); you will receive instructions on how to gather the carcass and where to send it for analysis.

If you become sick within 10 days of having handled a bird or mammal, contact your CLSC/Nursing Station and let them know what happened.

To learn more:

- Avian influenza | Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (nrbhss.ca)
- Wildlife and avian influenza Handling guidelines to protect your health Canada.ca

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