Recommendations to prevent the introduction of influenza through hunting activities

**Background.** A single duck can excrete billions of influenza virus particles per day. Influenza virus survives in cold, moist conditions and is preserved by freezing. These characteristics result in heavy contamination of pond and slough water, especially when the water is cold. Hunting, trapping and fishing activities bring people into contact with virus in mud and water that can then be moved to poultry flocks on things like contaminated boots, vehicles and dogs.

These recommendations apply to all of the following activities because they all bring people into contact with wild birds or their environment:

- Hunting (all types, not just waterfowl or game bird)
- Trapping
- Fishing
- Hiking

**Clothing**

*Clothing, especially boots, can carry virus in mud or water into poultry barns where it can infect the flock.* **Anything** that is worn in a wild bird environment must be removed and not brought into the poultry barn at all.

1. Clothes and shoes worn for any hunting, fishing, trapping, training dogs, hiking or dressing carcass activities need to be different than the ones used for work related activities.
2. Avoid cross contamination at home.
   a. When you return home from any hunting, fishing, trapping, training dogs, hiking or dressing carcass activities, enter your home through the door you don’t use when going to work (if possible). Consider the door and entry area contaminated and when you are clean and heading for the barns, leave by a different door.
   b. Leave your footwear in an area separate from your farm boots (back door, different closet, garage, etc)
   c. Put clothes from hunting into the washer immediately. Undress from hunting, trapping, etc in the laundry room as to avoid dragging anything with you into the “clean” areas of your home. Make sure these clothes and shoes/booths do not come in contact with the clothes, shoes/boots you will wear to work.
d. Clean and vacuum the laundry room to minimize the risk contaminating other parts of your home.
e. Shower and put on clean clothes.

3. After any hunting, fishing, trapping, training dogs, hiking or dressing carcass activities, the next morning, shower and put on clean clothes and shoes. Drive to work. Park your vehicle in the designated area.

**Vehicles**

*Vehicles that are used for any hunting, fishing, trapping, training dogs, hiking or dressing carcass activities are contaminated both on the inside and the outside. They must never come onto a poultry farm until fully cleaned and disinfected.*

1. Outside of the vehicle: Vehicles that have been used for any hunting, fishing, trapping, training dogs, hiking or dressing carcass activities must be washed off site. Running vehicles through a superwash before getting home will work. Make sure to get the undercarriage washed, which is usually only included with more expensive packages when using automated car wash.
2. Inside the vehicle: When you get home after hunting, clean and disinfect the interior of your truck.
   a. Remove floor mats and shake off all organic material.
   b. Spray floor mats with a lot of Lysol or a 10% solution of chlorine bleach. You want rubber to be dripping or carpet to be thoroughly saturated.
   c. Spray and wipe down the steering wheel and stick shift with Lysol or the bleach solution. Place a paper floor mat on the floor on the driver’s side or both sides if the other seat was used by another hunter.
   d. Do not go back into the truck unless you are showered and wearing clean clothes.
3. After any hunting, fishing, trapping, training dogs, hiking or dressing carcass activities, the next morning, shower and put on clean clothes and shoes. Drive to work. Park your vehicle in the designated area.

**Handling harvested birds**

*Carcasses are especially dangerous because they can carry a lot of virus even if the birds look healthy. When you handle and clean birds, you have the potential to create a lot of contamination.*

1. Only butcher harvested birds away from the poultry farm.
2. When you butcher, do it on surfaces that you can clean and disinfect or throw away.
a. Butcher harvested birds in the back of the pickup or on the ground.
b. Cover the back of the pickup with a plastic bag or lay one on the ground.
   Use this surface to clean carcasses.
3. Protect yourself from contamination and wear gloves.
4. Place meat in clean plastic bags, seal.
5. Wrap up feathers and remains in a bag and place inside another clean bag.
   Discard the double-bagged remains in the garbage.
6. Place knife in an enclosed container the outside of which can be washed and
disinfected. Place your gloves in the same container. Make sure the outside of
container is free of debris and wipe with disinfecting wipe prior to bringing into
vehicle or placing in toolbox.
7. Before you get home, find a place (like at the car wash in the next step) to fill a
bucket with soapy water. Wash, dry and disinfect knife, gloves and their
container. Disinfect them with a solution of Bleach or Lysol. Discard the dirty
water.
8. Clean the back of the pickup from feathers and blood and drive through a car
wash before getting back home.
9. Disinfect hands with an alcohol based gel disinfectant or other effective antiviral
disinfectant before getting back into the truck or touching the truck’s interior.

Hunting dogs

*Hunting dogs are in waterfowl environments where there is lots of virus when they are working.*

*Because of that, they should be considered to be contaminated at all times.*

1. Keep hunting dogs away from poultry barns at all times.
2. The area where hunting dogs are kept should be considered contaminated and you
   should stay away from it when you are wearing farm clothes or going to the barns.
3. Keep dogs (and cats) out of areas at home where you keep your boots and clothes
   that you use for work in the poultry barn.

Yourself

*You can carry influenza virus on your body without being infected. For that reason, it’s
important to shower thoroughly before returning to work after you’ve been hunting.*

1. Shower and wash your hair after any hunting, fishing, trapping, training dogs, hiking or
   butchering activities.
2. Keep your fingernails short and wash hands well before coming back to work.
3. Blow your nose and discard the tissue during your clean up process.
4. Wait 12 hours (overnight) before you come to work.
Suggested guidelines for hunters that come onto poultry farms:

1. Wear clean clothes and shoes that have never been in contact with clothing and boots when you come to the farm.
2. Keep vehicles that have been used for hunting away from the farm until they have been cleaned and disinfected on the inside and on the outside.
3. Never butcher harvested birds on the farm.
4. When you butcher birds, make sure you clean and disinfect everything you use and avoid cross contamination.
5. Keep hunting dogs away from poultry flocks. They should never enter poultry barns.
6. Stay away from dogs on the way to the barns because they should be considered contaminated.
7. After hunting, shower, clean your fingernails, blow your nose and wash your hair. Wait at least 12 hours before you return to work.