



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES COMMISSIONER ADAM H. PUTNAM

Exotic Newcastle Disease in Florida

In the second week of January, a case of Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) was diagnosed in cormorants in Pinellas County, Florida. END is relatively common among cormorants. Usually, they contract the non-pathogenic form of the disease, meaning it does not make them ill. In this case, tests showed it to be the more virulent, or pathogenic, form of END.

Since we have detected the pathogenic strain of END, it is important that you should be aware of several issues:

- It is unlikely that domestic poultry or pet birds will be infected by cormorants, but possible, and could cause serious death losses should it become established in domestic birds.
- In previous outbreaks in the United States, END has been transmitted to domestic poultry only once from cormorants.
- There is no serious human health risk associated with either form of END.
- END is a reportable disease and Floridians are required to report any suspected case to the Division of Animal Industry, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the USDA will continue to monitor this disease.

We need your help with the following:

Limit your poultry or pet birds' exposure to wild birds, especially migratory waterfowl.

Closely observe signs of END infection which include:

- Respiratory symptoms such as sneezing, gasping, coughing, and nasal discharge
- Diarrhea
- Low energy and loss of appetite
- Drop in egg production (in domestic poultry) or misshapen and soft-shelled eggs
- Nervous system impairment such as trembling, drooping wings, circling, and twisting or paralysis of the head and neck
- Swelling around the head
- Purple discoloration of the wattles, combs and legs
- Inability to perch or fly (in pet birds)

If pet birds show any of the above signs, contact your private veterinarian.

Report wild bird illness or die-offs to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at <http://myfwc.com/bird>.

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Report domestic poultry illness or die-offs to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services at: rad@freshfromflorida.com or call (850) 410-0900 during business hours or (800) 342-5869 after hours. You may also contact the USDA Area Office at vsfl@usda.gov or call (352) 333-3060 during business hours.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

ADAM H. PUTNAM
COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas J. Holt". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Thomas J. Holt, State Veterinarian/Director
Division of Animal Industry

TJH/amv