



# MADERA COUNTY PUBLIC INFORMATION TEAM

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **Human Cases of Bird Flu Confirmed in Madera County** *Individuals contracted the illness through contact with infected dairy cattle. Risk to the general public remains low.*

Madera County Department of Public Health (MCDPH), in coordination with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), have identified two cases of H5N1 bird flu (one confirmed case and one presumptive positive case) in individuals who had contact with infected dairy cattle. The individuals have mild symptoms, are being treated with antiviral medications, and are isolating at home.

“Although there are confirmed human cases of bird flu in Madera County, the risk to the general public remains low,” stated Dr. Simon Paul, Public Health Officer. The virus was first detected in California in sick dairy cattle in August, and public health officials have been closely monitoring workers for illness at dairy facilities experiencing an outbreak of bird flu among their cattle herds.

People who interact with infected animals are at higher risk of getting bird flu. Public Health recommends that personal protective equipment, or PPE, such as respirators (N95 masks), eye protection (face shields or safety goggles), and gloves be worn by anyone working with animals or materials that are infected or potentially infected with the bird flu virus. Wearing PPE helps prevent infection. There has been no evidence of human-to-human transmissions of the H5N1 bird flu virus. Currently, there is no known link or contact between the two human cases, suggesting only animal-to-human spread of the virus in California. MCDPH has been actively working alongside industry partners in distributing PPE for farmworkers.

Pasteurized milk and dairy products continue to be safe to consume, as pasteurization is fully effective at inactivating the bird flu virus. As an added precaution, and according to longstanding state and federal requirements, milk from sick cows is not permitted in the public milk supply.

People exposed to infected animals should monitor for the following symptoms for 10 days after their last exposure: eye redness (conjunctivitis), cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, diarrhea, vomiting, muscle or body aches, headaches, fatigue, trouble breathing, and fever. If they start to feel sick, they should immediately isolate, notify MCDPH, and work with public health and healthcare providers to get timely testing and treatment. Exposed workers can notify MCDPH at (559) 675-7893 or [publichealth@maderacounty.com](mailto:publichealth@maderacounty.com).

MCDPH recommends all residents — especially workers at risk for exposure to bird flu — receive a seasonal flu vaccine. Although the seasonal flu vaccine will not protect against bird flu, it can decrease the risk of being infected with both viruses at the same time and reduce the chance of severe illness from seasonal flu.

For the latest information on the national bird flu response, see the CDC's [Bird Flu Current Situation](#).

To report an unusual number of sick livestock or you suspect Bird Flu in your livestock, call MCDPH at (559) 675-7893.

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