



Policy Memorandum

To: Stakeholders and Interested Parties

From: Miles V. McEvoy, Deputy Administrator

Subject: Confinement of Poultry Flocks Due to Low or Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, or Other Infectious Diseases

Date: April 3, 2017
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Certified organic poultry operations must establish and maintain preventative livestock health care practices, which may include temporary confinement. Provisions for temporary confinement are described in the USDA organic regulations under 7 CFR 205.239(b), which provides for the temporary confinement of organic livestock and poultry because of conditions under which the health, safety, or well-being of the animals could be jeopardized.

Temporary confinement may be appropriate under certain conditions such as when low or highly pathogenic avian influenza is detected in the area. Organic poultry may be confined on a temporary basis in areas in proximity to low or highly pathogenic avian influenza findings. Temporary confinement can be done without compromising the organic status of the certified operation under these conditions.

If it is determined that temporary confinement of birds is needed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of organic flocks, then producers and certifiers may work together to determine an appropriate method and duration of confinement of organic poultry flocks without a loss of organic certification. The method of temporary confinement used must be approved by the certifying agent and should provide the necessary protection to the birds while meeting the remaining requirements of the USDA organic regulations. Continuous total confinement of any organic poultry indoors is prohibited.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) provides guidance to poultry producers, including free range and organic producers, regarding bio-security considerations for their operations. For more information on biosecurity practices, view: [APHIS: Biosecurity for Birds](#). APHIS also provides information about avian influenza and other animal diseases at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth>