

NEWS TIP

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NC State Experts Can Discuss Bird Flu

The threat of avian influenza, although currently remote to most Americans, is being closely monitored across the globe. North Carolina State University veterinarians are equipped to provide timely information about bird flu and to quash misconceptions about the disease.

Dr. Donna Carver, associate professor of poultry science and extension veterinarian in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, 919/515-5526 or donna_carver@ncsu.edu, is an expert in epidemiology, or the study of infectious agents and how they behave in large populations. These agents may produce a disease such as avian influenza in a flock of birds, or may cause no disease in the birds but cause disease in humans. Carver says understanding how these agents behave in a flock is important so that prevention programs can be developed and implemented. Many transmissible agents can be avoided through proper biosecurity and monitoring. Training growers in best management practices for disease prevention is one way to prevent disease outbreaks and to reduce food-safety threats, she adds.

Dr. James S. Guy, professor of poultry health management in the College of Veterinary Medicine, 919/513-6287 or jim_guy@ncsu.edu, is an expert in diagnosis and control of viral infections in domestic animals, especially chickens and turkeys.

Dr. Michael Martin, assistant professor in the Department of Population, Health and Pathobiology at the College of Veterinary Medicine 919/513-6330 or michael_martin@ncsu.edu, is a member of the CVM Poultry Health Management team and an expert in avian epidemiology, avian ethics and welfare, diseases in broiler breeders, and avian biosecurity and disease prevention. Martin has studied avian influenza as it relates to disease prevention in poultry farming. Disease prevention is a critically important part of rearing agricultural animals. Healthy animals are more productive and require fewer resources. Animal health is also crucial in protecting the nation's food supply and protecting public health.

Dr. Barrett Slenning, associate professor of ruminant production medicine, economics and epidemiology in the College of Veterinary Medicine, 919/513-6324 or barrett_slenning@ncsu.edu, is the leader of NC State's Animal Biosecurity Risk Management Group. Slenning studies agricultural bioterrorism and biosecurity, epidemiology, agricultural

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economics and bioterrorism. He recently discussed avian flu with NBC News medical correspondent Helen Chickering.