

Iowa officials warn poultry farmers to prepare for bird flu

By [Chris Scott](#) on 1/26/2016

Local officials are warning poultry farmers in one of the hardest-hit states during last year's avian influenza outbreak to prepare for potential future animal health emergencies before they arise.

Iowa Agriculture Secretary Bill Northey listed a resurgence of bird flu as one of the top issues that Iowa farmers should be proactive about after 31.5 million birds were affected by highly pathogenic avian influenza last year. He announced on the [Iowa Agriculture Dept. website](#) that all but one of the 72 commercial poultry farms that quarantined their facilities last year have begun the restocking process or are fully restocked.

Northey last week also has asked the Iowa House Agriculture Committee to approve a \$500,000 state appropriation to help farmers prepare for the possibility of future outbreaks, including avian influenza, according to the [Sioux City Journal](#). Iowa coordinated its response to avian influenza through a combination of efforts of the Iowa Dept. of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS).

Poultry farmers in several states have expressed concern in recent weeks following the confirmation of [avian influenza at several farms in Indiana](#). The outbreak resulted in the culling of more than 400,000 chickens and turkeys in Indiana so far.