



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

JAMES K. HAVEMAN
DIRECTOR

February 20, 2013

Dear Feed and Agricultural Supply Store Owners, Managers, and Employees,

Preventing Human *Salmonella* Infections Linked to Contact with Live Poultry

The purpose of this letter is to provide retail locations with information and resources on the risk of human *Salmonella* infections from contact with live poultry, including chicks, chickens, ducklings, ducks, geese, and turkeys. Stores selling live poultry can protect the health of their customers by both safely displaying poultry in the store and educating the public as to how to be safe around live poultry. By adopting a few simple practices, you and your employees involved in the sale of live poultry can play an important role in preventing human illness from *Salmonella*.

Live poultry, especially baby poultry, commonly carry *Salmonella* germs. People can get *Salmonella* from contact with the birds or their environments. These germs can contaminate a bird's body and anything in the area where they are displayed or housed, such as cages or coops. Live poultry can carry *Salmonella* and still appear healthy and clean.

In recent years, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported an increasing number of *Salmonella* outbreaks linked to handling live poultry purchased from agricultural supply stores and mail-order hatcheries. Of the 45 *Salmonella* outbreaks linked to contact with live poultry that have occurred since the 1990s, there have been 1,367 confirmed human illnesses, 204 hospitalizations and 4 deaths. In 2012 alone, 8 outbreaks were traced to contact with live poultry.

Store employees can do some simple things to help protect themselves and their customers:

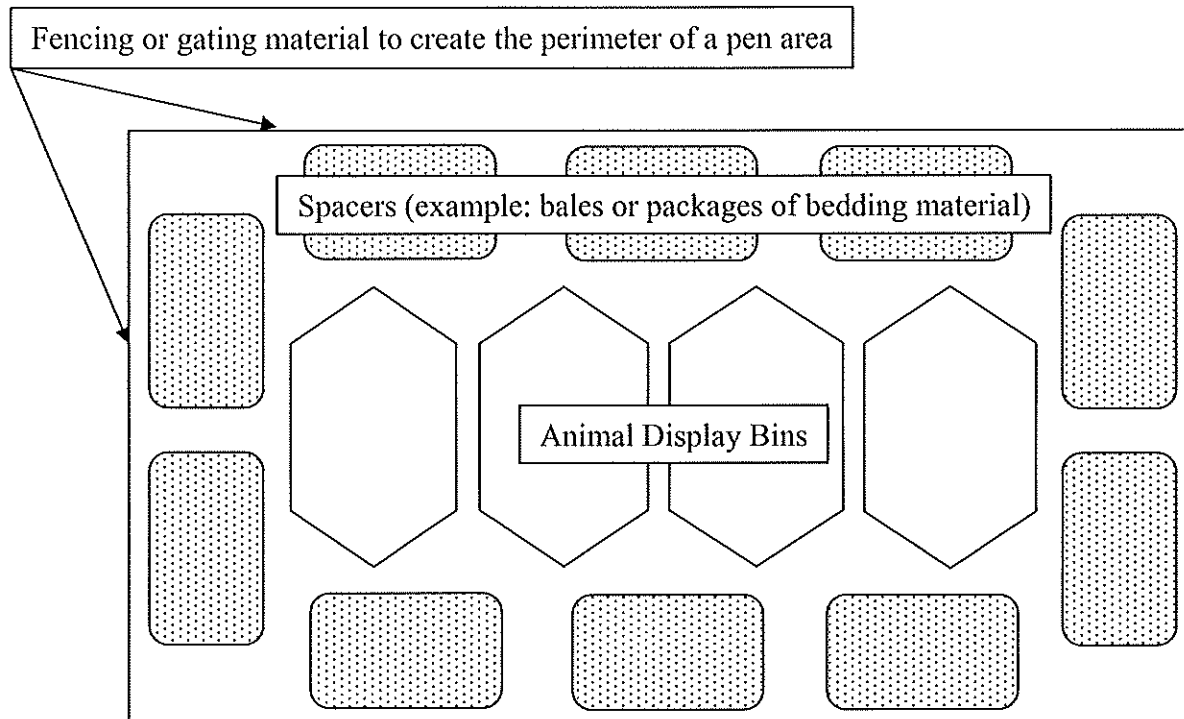
- Display live poultry behind a barrier such that customers, especially children, cannot easily touch birds (see the 'Live Poultry Display Example' below).
- Provide clean, hygienic packaging to customers purchasing live poultry.
- Provide an educational flyer on safe handling of live poultry to all customers purchasing live poultry (see the 'Additional Resources' section below).
- Place the enclosed educational poster near areas where birds are displayed in clear view (extra posters can be printed, see the 'Additional Resources' section below).
- Offer hand washing stations or hand sanitizer next to poultry display areas and tell customers to wash hands right after leaving the poultry display area.

Raising backyard poultry can be a rewarding experience. Feed and agricultural supply stores can play an important role in educating their customers on how to safely enjoy their backyard poultry. Thank you for your help in sharing these messages with your customers and employees. If you have questions or would like additional information, contact the Communicable Disease Division at 517-335-8165.

Sincerely,

Corinne Miller, PhD
State Epidemiologist and
Director, Bureau of Disease Control, Prevention and Epidemiology

Live Poultry Display Example



Additional Resources:

- **Free educational posters** for customers available in 3 languages (English, Spanish and French), and in multiple sizes: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/resources/posters.htm#amphibians>
- **Educational features:**
 - Keeping Backyard Poultry: <http://www.cdc.gov/features/salmonellapoultry/>
 - Risk of Human *Salmonella* Infections from Live Baby Poultry: <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/SalmonellaBabyBirds/>
- Read the recommendations in the **Compendium of Measures to Prevent Disease Associated with Animals in Public Settings, 2011**: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr6004.pdf>
- **Biosecurity for Birds**: This USDA outreach campaign works to educate backyard poultry owners on how to keep their flocks healthy and free from such diseases as Avian Influenza (AI) and Exotic Newcastle Disease (END). <http://healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov>