

Today is _____, _____ the _____. This is Ken Morgan's Northcoast Ag Report, our lead story is about _____ when we return

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Are your birds safe from avian influenza?

Take UC's biosecurity survey to see how you score

Outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza in January 2017 killed birds at commercial poultry farms and backyard flocks in the UK, China and South Korea. Thousands more ducks, chickens and other birds were culled to contain the disease. The outbreaks are spurring University of California scientists to develop more safeguards to protect U.S. poultry from avian influenza.

To prevent outbreaks of this highly contagious virus in the United States, commercial and backyard poultry owners are being asked to fill out an online biosecurity survey. UC Agriculture and Natural Resources and UC Davis researchers are studying poultry-raising practices to help strengthen the industry's defenses against avian influenza.

"With changing migration patterns of wild birds and global movements of poultry, there is an urgent need to develop plans to protect U.S. poultry against highly pathogenic avian influenza," said [Beatriz Martínez López](#), director of the Center for Animal Disease Modeling and Surveillance in the School of Veterinary Medicine at UC Davis.

People who raise chickens, quail, ducks, turkeys, geese or other birds anywhere in the United States are invited to fill out the survey.

"We want to hear from all poultry producers: from the large commercial farms producing chicken eggs to the poultry enthusiasts who raise a few ornamental show birds in their backyards," said Martínez López, who is part of the University of California's Agricultural Experiment Station.

The survey asks which bird species are being raised and a few flock management questions. Is the flock housed or kept outdoors? How often do you get new birds? What is the source of new birds? It also asks questions about location, such as the distance of the birds from ponds and other bodies of water that may attract migrating waterfowl.

Immediately after completing the online survey, participants receive a biosecurity score and recommendations to help them make more informed decisions.

"Each producer will receive their own biosecurity score and customized recommendations," Martínez López said. "Recommendations highly depend on the production system and we tried to adapt them to make the changes easier to implement for individual flocks."

The survey data will be confidential and only summaries will be made publicly available in research reports and peer-reviewed publications.

By analyzing biosecurity and management practices on poultry operations and backyard flocks, Martínez López and visiting professor Sharmin Chowdhury will be able to identify high-risk locations and time periods for avian flu outbreaks. The information will be used to develop biosecurity education programs for poultry farmers, backyard producers and poultry veterinarians.

The survey takes about 15-20 minutes to complete. To participate, visit <http://bit.ly/2kkMycf> by March 1.

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- [Some Key Numbers from USDA's New 2017 Income Forecast](#)
USDA Chief Economist Rob Johansson giving some of the key numbers in USDA's new 2017 farm income forecast.

U.S. Cattlemen's Association Supporting Zinke as Secretary of Interior

The United States Cattlemen's Association Tuesday announced its support for Congressman Ryan Zinke, the nominee by President Donald Trump to the Secretary of Interior position. The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee approved President Trump's nominee for the position by a vote of 16-6 on January 31st. Zinke will now go before the full Senate, where a confirmation vote will likely take place in the next few weeks. USCA President Kenny Graner Tuesday penned a letter supporting Zinke, saying USCA is confident he "will continue to serve the best interests of all stakeholders." Zinke is a Republican U.S. Representative from Montana, and has previously served as a member of the House Committee on Natural Resources. USCA says cattle producers, who are one of the many vested stakeholders and users of public lands, need a voice that "will balance the needs of both U.S. ranchers and the natural resources at hand."