

Dear PDS Clients,

Given the recent developments in the United States with the confirmation of H5N1 infections causing clinical disease in dairy cattle, and the potential for similar situations to arise in Canada as wild bird migrations progress over the spring, some practitioners may be wondering what to do if they suspect H5N1 infection in their client's animals.

This situation is rapidly evolving, and potential recommendations seem to shift hourly. For that reason, at this point the Saskatchewan Chief Veterinary Officer is recommending that veterinarians who are concerned about H5N1 in cattle contact the provincial Disease Surveillance Veterinarian, Dr. Wendy Wilkins, at 306-798-0253 or [wendy.wilkins@gov.sk.ca](mailto:wendy.wilkins@gov.sk.ca) for further information or instructions.

As a reminder, the clinical manifestation of H5N1 infection in dairy cattle appears to be:

- decreased herd level milk production;
- acute sudden drop in production with some severely impacted cows experiencing thicker, concentrated, colostrum-like milk;
- decrease in feed consumption with a simultaneous drop in rumen motility;
- abnormal tacky or loose feces, lethargy, dehydration, and fever.

Several cats in impacted dairy barns have also been infected, and some have died. There is suspicion that the cats were fed unpasteurized, discarded milk, though eating infected birds is equally likely.

Nonetheless, this serves as a reminder to always encourage dairy producers to never sell or consume unpasteurized milk, and to pasteurize discarded milk before feeding to pets, calves, or other animals.

The USDA has created a website where you can find the latest situation updates from the United States. <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-detections/livestock>