

U.S. poultry industry to test chickens

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The U.S commercial chicken industry is taking steps to ensure the public that its chickens are safe to eat.

The National Chicken Council has started a testing program to make sure chicken flocks and the food products made from them are free of potentially hazardous forms of avian influenza.

"Through comprehensive testing covering all flocks, chicken companies will add another layer to the multiple barriers that already exist to protect Americans consumers and continue to ensure safety and quality of the food supply," said Stephen Pretanik, director of science and technology for the National Chicken Council.

H5N1, the highly pathogenic form of avian influenza causing fear of an influenza epidemic, has never occurred in the United States, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has said.

Any flock found to have avian influenza in the H5 or H7 types will be promptly and humanely destroyed on the farm and disposed of in an environmentally acceptable manner, the NCC said.

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