

Scientists: Duck is 1st wild bird flu case in US in 5 years

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A duck killed by a hunter in South Carolina had a contagious and dangerous bird flu that has not been detected in the wild in the U.S. in five years, officials said.

The flu poses a low risk to people but can spread quickly through chicken houses and other poultry businesses.

The Eurasian H5 [avian influenza](#) was first detected by Clemson University scientists and confirmed by federal testing, the school said in a news release.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture alerted global health officials. Scattered Eurasian H5 infections have been detected in 2022 from Portugal to Bulgaria and in December, two cases were reported in eastern Canada, officials said.

Anyone who has poultry, including backyard farms, needs to review their practices to keep birds safe from disease, said State Veterinarian Michael J. Neault, who runs Clemson University's Livestock Poultry Health program.

Those practices include thoroughly washing hands before and after handling wild and domesticated birds and using gloves and other [protective gear](#) when handling live birds.

Farmers should also keep their birds away from areas where geese and

ducks roam, clean their cages and coops regularly and buy new birds from reputable sources and keep them away from the rest of the flock for 30 days, the university said.

"So far we have no indication that (the flu) has jumped from wild migratory birds to poultry and we'd very much like to keep it that way," Neault said in a statement.

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