

USDA testing beef for H5N1 amid current outbreak in dairy cows

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On April 29, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that it is now testing ground beef for any presence of the H5N1 virus that continues to spread among dairy cows.

The agency said it is sampling ground beef bought in [grocery stores](#) in

states where dairy cattle have tested positive for the virus, also known as H5N1, *CNN* reported. Officials are also testing samples of muscle tissue from sick cows that have been culled from their herd. Last but not least, the USDA is injecting a "virus surrogate" into [ground beef](#) and then cooking it at different temperatures to see how much virus is killed under each heat setting.

Still, the agency stressed this testing does not mean the beef supply is not safe.

"USDA is confident that the meat supply is safe. USDA has a rigorous meat inspection process" and "multiple safeguards in place to protect consumers," the agency said in a statement, *CNN* reported.

"We recommend consumers properly handle raw meats and cook to a safe internal temperature," which kills germs in meat, the agency added.

U.S. health officials are already testing retail milk samples for live bird flu virus, and none has been found in any of the first batch of samples tested, federal health officials said Friday. Those early findings should reassure the public that the milk sold in stores remains safe, officials added.

More information: [CNN article](#).

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