



Welcome to the Washington State Department of Agriculture Avian Health Program's

Avian Disease Prevention Training Course

The goal of this course is to provide you with a basic understanding of avian health terms, concepts and biosecurity



What is a Bird Disease?

- Disease is a change from normal health, not including injury
 - Effects of disease can include:
 - Reduced egg production
 - Failure to thrive
 - Increased death loss
 - Disease may be spread between birds (infectious) or not (non-infectious)



Recognizing Disease

- Disease changes may be subtle, so it is important to know what “normal” or “healthy” looks like for your bird. It can be difficult to recognize when your bird is sick, especially in the early phases of illness.





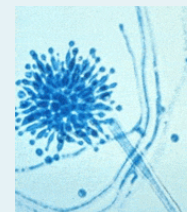
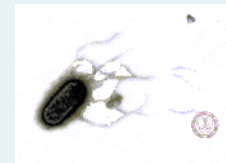
Recognizing Disease

- Examine your birds on a daily basis to look for early signs of illness such as:
 - Sneezing
 - Coughing
 - Reduced intake of feed and water
- Birds may appear healthy, but may still carry diseases (“carriers”) or be in the early stages of illness.



Infectious Diseases

- Infectious diseases are caused by four main types of disease causing agents (pathogens):
 - Bacteria (Fowl Typhoid)
 - Viruses (Avian Influenza)
 - Fungi (Aspergillosis)





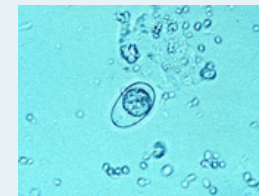
– Parasites

- Internal

- Worms (Round Worms)



- Protozoa (Coccidiosis)



- External (Poultry Louse)





Disease Symptoms

- General symptoms
 - Ruffled feathers
 - Weight loss
 - Decreased appetite
 - Drooping wings
 - Depressed behavior (pet birds)
 - Failure to stand on perches (pet birds)



Disease Symptoms

- Digestive system
 - Persistent watery diarrhea
 - Vomiting of feed or water
- Reproductive system
 - Decreased egg production
 - Malformed eggs
 - Low fertility



Disease Symptoms

- Nervous system
 - Weakness
 - Circling
 - Muscle tremors
 - Severe depression
 - Twisting of head or neck
 - Lameness
 - Paralysis



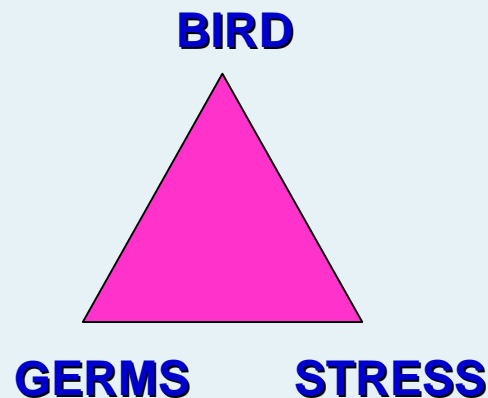
Disease Symptoms

- Respiratory system
 - Sneezing
 - Coughing
 - Nasal discharge
 - Gasping for air
 - Labored breathing



Disease Triangle

- Disease control is based on three areas of control

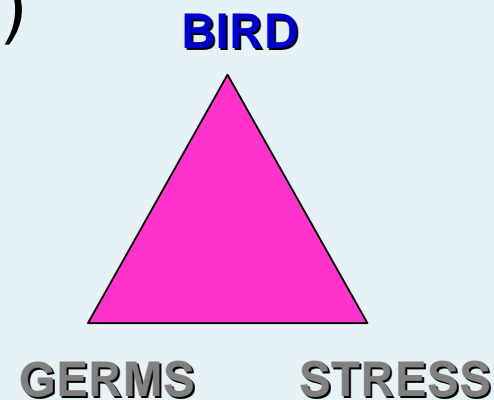


- Increasing **bird** resistance to disease
- Reducing exposure to pathogens (**germs**)
- Reducing environmental **stress**



Increasing Bird Resistance

- Ensure proper nutrition
 - Provide adequate, clean food and water
 - Monitor weight periodically
 - Feed pet birds more than seeds (fruits, leafy vegetables, sprouted seeds)





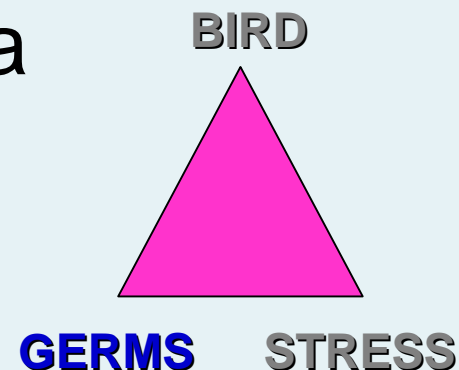
Increasing Bird Resistance

- Locate an avian veterinarian before you need one
- Consult your veterinarian in the event of disease or before beginning treatment
- Antibiotics **do not** work against viral diseases and no antiviral drugs are available for birds



Medications & Vaccinations

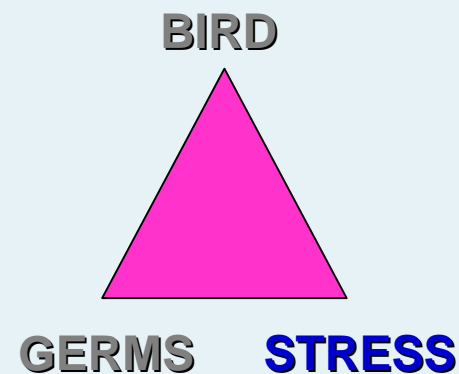
- Store drugs and vaccines correctly, check expiration dates and discard when expired
- Follow instructions on the vaccine or medication label
- Vaccinate your birds against diseases known to exist in the area





Reducing Stress

- Provide adequate space
- Provide adequate ventilation
- Maintain proper temperature
- Provide toys to encourage activity for pet birds





Biosecurity

- **Biosecurity** is the set of practices that prevent your bird from being exposed to infectious diseases.





How are Bird Diseases Spread?

- Diseases are spread in two ways:
 - **Direct Contact** – contact between a sick bird and a healthy bird including through:
 - Feathers
 - Waste
 - Water droplets from sneezes
 - **Indirect Contact** – when a healthy bird comes in contact with objects contaminated by a sick bird



Examples of Indirect Contact

- Dirty hands of handlers
- Contaminated clothes or boots
- Contaminated equipment
- Contaminated vehicles (tires, floorboards)
- Contact with other animals (insects, rodents, birds)





Biosecurity

- Clean and disinfect where your birds live
 - Remove all old litter, manure, and other debris
 - Scrub surfaces, then apply a disinfectant
 - Some disinfectants can be toxic to birds, check with your avian veterinarian for recommendations
 - **Note:** If you do not clean first, applying disinfectants is a waste of time and money!



Biosecurity

- Limit handling and contact of your birds by other people
- Isolate new or sick birds for at least 21 days (3 weeks)
- Prevent contact with other animals and birds, keep your birds in pens or in an enclosure of some sort. Birds that run free, even in an enclosed yard, can come in contact with wild birds or other fowl that may be diseases.



Biosecurity

- Establish “dirty” and “clean” areas. A clearly marked barrier is good to isolate your birds from the outside world. Consider the area outside the barrier to be contaminated.
- Protect birds at offsite facilities (e.g., fairs, bird shows)
- Maintain clean feed and water.



Biosecurity at Swap Meets

- Vendors should do their best to separate birds from the public
- If other vendors are next to you, hang a tarp between you and the other vendors
- Clean and disinfect the tarp at the end of each day
- Avoid having other vendors handle your birds
- Keep accurate records of all sales and movements of birds



Biosecurity in Grooming

- Have your groomer:
 - Disinfect his / her hands before and after handling each bird
 - Sterilize cutting or clipping instruments before and after each use
 - Use a clean holding towel with each bird
- Avoid using “holding cages” for waiting birds, keep your bird in your bird’s own cage



Biosecurity at Pet Stores

- Have customers disinfect their hands before handling any birds
- Display birds behind glass barriers to prevent their exposure to customers carrying germs
- Have employees caring for pet birds:
 - Wear clean clothes at work each day
 - Disinfect their hands before handling each bird





Reporting a Sick Bird

Contact the Washington State Department of
Agriculture's Avian Health Program at:

1-800-606-3056

bbaker@agr.wa.gov

<http://www.agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/AnimalHealth>