



Defend the Flock Newsletter / Winter Edition 2019

# Defend the Flock: Your Biosecurity Bulletin

## TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS: Steps for Success: Your NPIP Biosecurity Audit

USDA APHIS hosted a free webinar to share important information to help commercial poultry producers meet the upcoming National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) audit requirement. APHIS brought together a team of experts, including:

- Dr. Elena Behnke, National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP), USDA APHIS Veterinary Services
- Dr. Chrislyn Wood Nicholson, Veterinary Medical Officer/Poultry Specialist, USDA APHIS Veterinary Services
- Dr. Julie Helm, Official State Agent for NPIP for South Carolina
- Dr. Kristi Scott, Staff Veterinarian and HACCP Manager at ISE America

The webinar provides an overview of the NPIP audit requirement, with practical suggestions for how to prepare.

Listen to the webinar and review the follow-up Q&A at the Defend the Flock Resource Center, under the "Webinars" tab.

*The official NPIP Biosecurity Audit is a paperwork audit of the biosecurity plan and program. Site visits are required only if the farm fails the initial audit and requests another review.*

## Q&A Vet for a Day: A Talk with Dr. Julie Gauthier

We asked Dr. Julie Gauthier, DVM, Assistant Director for Poultry Health and Veterinary Medical Officer in USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service what it's like to "Defend our Flocks."



**1. What led you to become a poultry veterinarian?** *During vet school at Michigan State University, I became interested in conservation of endangered breeds of livestock, particularly heritage poultry. After graduation, I started my own flock of heritage poultry and found that my veterinary clients and poultry fancier friends were eager for flock health and management advice. My career as a backyard poultry veterinarian began with a horse owner asking, "Doc, can you take a look?" while pointing to her roaming stable-yard chickens. From that day, my*

*small flock outreach and advocacy efforts expanded into blogging, public speaking, and finally writing a backyard flock keepers' self-help book.*

**2. We understand that you ran your own small poultry farm before joining APHIS. Tell us about your flock and how you practiced biosecurity.** *Biosecurity is challenging for pastured poultry producers like myself. Some of the risks, particularly contact with wildlife, are easier to manage in flocks confined indoors. I focused on measures under my control, such as keeping a closed flock, restricting visitors, training anyone who took care of the birds, cleaning and disinfection, reporting and segregating sick birds, and disposing of dead birds. My flock participated in the NPIP program and maintained Pullorum-Typhoid and Avian Influenza Clean status.*

continued

## Report Sick Birds

If you see signs of illness, take action right away!

Veterinarian \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cooperative Extension Office \_\_\_\_\_  
 State Veterinarian/Animal or Poultry Diagnostic Lab \_\_\_\_\_  
 USDA \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

866.536.7593





# — SAVE THE DATE —

## BIRD HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK

February 24–28, 2020

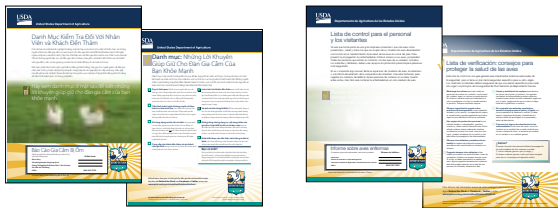
New *Defend the Flock* webinar and resources

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and the *Defend the Flock* website for updates

## Free Resources Available for Biosecurity Planning and Training

The *Defend the Flock* Resource Center offers 24/7 access to checklists, infographics, videos, webinars, and other resources to help you keep your flocks safe and healthy. Materials are available for download or print to share with visitors, staff, partners, students, and suppliers.

The checklists provide practical tips for important topics covered by the 14 principles. All checklists are available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. Follow the *Defend the Flock* pages on Facebook and Twitter for additions to the Resource Center.



## Q&A Vet for a Day: A Talk with Dr. Julie Gauthier

*continued*

**3. What are some common misconceptions that poultry growers have?** *“My neighbor is my biggest risk.” I frequently hear this myth from both backyard and commercial flock keepers. The greater threat to biosecurity is closer to home. Anyone who crosses your line of separation—whether a caretaker, service provider, regulatory official, or another type of visitor—is a bigger risk, and generally more controllable, than the guy or gal next door.*

**4. What sources of information do you recommend for keeping flocks healthy?** *I am a fan of the [Defend the Flock](#) and the [Poultry Biosecurity](#) websites. These sites take much of the mystery and heavy-lifting out of developing a biosecurity plan and providing training and outreach materials to workers and visitors. I encourage all U.S. flock keepers to get to know their closest Cooperative Extension Service and veterinary diagnostic laboratory, where valuable tools and expertise are available to pin down flock health problems, often at a nominal cost to flock owners.*



*“Anyone who crosses your line of separation—whether a caretaker, service provider, regulatory official, or another type of visitor—is a bigger risk, and generally more controllable, than the guy or gal next door.”*

For more information about how to keep your flocks healthy, follow **Defend the Flock** on **Facebook** and **Twitter** and visit [www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth/defendtheflock](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth/defendtheflock).

