FACT SHEET—Bird Flu (H5N1 Avian Influenza)

Bird Flu is a Disease of Wild and Farm Birds

- This type of influenza can also infect other animals and people.
- Since the 1990s, bird flu outbreaks have occurred mostly in eastern Asia.
- Bird flu is spreading to other regions.

Person-to-Person Spread of Bird Flu is Rare

- Human cases of bird flu have been reported in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Europe.
  - The number of human cases of bird flu has been increasing.
  - Most human cases resulted from direct contact with infected birds or their droppings.
  - While it is rare for a person to get bird flu - it can be very serious and often fatal.
- To date, no cases of bird flu have occurred in the U.S. Travelers to areas with bird flu should take precautions before, during, and after travel.
  - It is safe to eat well-cooked poultry.
    - The U.S. bans imports of poultry from areas with bird flu.
    - People can avoid germs by carefully handling and cooking poultry.
    - Cooking destroys germs, including the bird flu virus.

Scientists are Monitoring the Spread of Bird Flu

- Global laboratory networks are watching to see if the virus changes enough to infect humans directly and easily.
- Systems are in place for rapidly sharing disease alerts.
- There is a worldwide effort to control the spread of bird flu.
  - Bird flocks are continually checked for illness.
  - Birds that appear sick are separated from the flock.
  - Infected and possibly infected birds are killed.

For More Information:

KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services
Frankfort, KY
http://healthalerts.ky.gov

KY Regional Poison Center Louisville, KY
EMERGENCY: 1-800-222-1222
http://www.krpc.com/
Lake Cumberland District Health Dept.
(606) 678 – 4761

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Atlanta, GA
Toll free: 1-800-311-3435
http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic/
http://www.pandemicflu.gov