

## UPDATED AVIAN INFLUENZA REGULATIONS

Most poultry keepers will no longer have to keep their birds housed or under cover after February 28. DEFRA aims to ease the restrictions so that only poultry keepers in areas at higher risk from bird flu will be affected. There is still a requirement for all those keeping poultry to remain vigilant and observe good biosecurity measures. Poultry keepers can check if they will remain in a higher risk area after February 28 by checking a map on the DEFRA website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu>

All areas in England should be considered at high risk of H5N8 in wild birds. It is vital that all poultry keepers (whether they have commercial flocks or just a few birds in a backyard flock), take robust precautions, in particular to keep their birds separate from wild birds. All poultry keepers will need to undertake some minimum biosecurity measures. This will be required by law. However for the majority of keepers we anticipate that mandatory housing will no longer be required. In England there are also areas which we regard as 'higher risk' – generally, these are areas which are near where wild birds (and in particular gulls and wild waterfowl) gather, such as lakes, marshes or estuaries; they include areas where we've found cases of the avian flu H5N8 virus.

The new measures will be reviewed at the end of April.