
New Hampshire
*Department of Agriculture,
Markets & Food*

NH Division of Animal Industry

NH Dept. of Agriculture, Markets & Food

<http://agriculture.nh.gov/divisions/animal-industry/index.htm>

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Salmonella and Chicks/Live Poultry

The recent NH Dept. of Health & Human Services release regarding Salmonella infections in New Hampshire (**Salmonella Infections in New Hampshire Linked to National Outbreak**, August 12, 2014) and subsequent media reports have created some number of phone calls to the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food from chick owners who want to know about testing options, costs, and any number of other queries specific to their situation. Since it is possible that thousands of people in NH purchased birds from Mount Healthy either directly or indirectly, the number of people with questions about the situation may increase in the next few days as people have a more time to see the media accounts. What we are hearing so far:

Can I test my birds for Salmonella enteritidis (SE)?

Yes. Testing may identify the presence of the SE organism in the animal's feces and/or environment.

Should I test my birds for SE?

Most poultry show no clinical signs of SE infection. Unless the owner has been diagnosed with salmonellosis, the value of testing birds is questionable. Infected birds may only shed Salmonella intermittently so a negative test may not mean that your bird(s) is not infected. Any testing programs aimed at finding SE in your bird(s) must include ongoing surveillance to be effective.

How much does testing cost?

Bacterial culture services for SE at the NH Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory range from \$12 to \$35 per sample depending on the type of sample submitted.

Who pays for testing?

The bird owner is responsible for the cost of testing.

Who collects the samples?

You should work with your veterinarian to collect and submit the proper samples. In the absence of a veterinarian, the department may be able to collect samples.

What is my liability if I sell eggs, poultry, or live birds?

This is a discussion to have with your legal counsel and insurance carrier.

What are the risks to my family?

Hand washing and proper food handling are the best and easiest ways to prevent infection. More thorough information can be found at

http://www.cdc.gov/nczved/divisions/dfbmd/diseases/salmonella_enteritidis/.

Does the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) testing I have had done in the past look for SE?

No. NPIP testing typically looks for different organisms and does not prove that your birds are free from SE without specific SE testing.

Is there a cure if my birds are positive?

Elimination of SE from a flock is very challenging since it requires not only treatment of the birds with antibiotics but concurrent management of feed, water, and bedding sources, as well as the elimination of rodent, insect, and wildlife exposures. As an example, you can see the management and testing requirements of the FDA's SE rule at <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/GuidanceRegulation/UCM232271.pdf>.

What will happen if my birds are positive?

SE is a reportable animal disease in NH. Your flock's positive test results would be kept on file by the department.