

Bird Flu – From Birds to Cows ... and Humans?

Analysis by [Ashley Armstrong](#)

December 31, 2024

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › The first cases of H5N1 bird flu transmission from birds to dairy cows were reported in the U.S. on March 25, 2024, spreading to 845 dairy herds across 16 states, though most cows reportedly recover within days
- › Between January 2022 and December 2024, nearly 123 million birds were euthanized in attempts to stop the spread of bird flu, raising questions about the necessity and impact of mass culling practices
- › Raw Farm in California was temporarily shut down and had its products recalled after milk tested positive for bird flu, despite no confirmed cases of humans contracting bird flu from consuming raw milk. Yet, according to CDC data from 2005 to 2020, no virus has ever been documented to transmit through raw milk, with all 3,807 recorded milkborne illnesses being linked to bacterial pathogens rather than viruses
- › The FDA's testing protocol established in August 2024 requires raw milk to be tested for bird flu using PCR tests with a cycle threshold of 45, which critics argue is likely to produce false positives
- › Federal mandatory H5N1 testing protocols have been implemented in six states (California, Colorado, Michigan, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, and Oregon) as of December 16, 2024, with plans to expand nationwide

Back at it again! This time, it's not quite COVID – but the headlines are eerily familiar. The latest chapter in the bird flu saga is unfolding in animals, with the virus taking an unexpected leap from birds to dairy cows and, yes, even humans.

On March 25, 2024, the first-ever cases of "bird-to-cow" transmission of H5N1 avian influenza were reported in the U.S. Since then, the virus has made its way across 16 states, impacting 845 dairy herds, according to the CDC.¹ According to the Ohio Department of Agriculture, however, most cows reportedly recover within a few days. Where did the bird flu come from?

Many point fingers at wild birds, the usual culprits when it comes to avian flu. But before we rush to blame nature, it's worth asking: is this virus truly "natural" or have we inadvertently tinkered with something that's now out of control?^{2,3,4,5}

Enter Gain-of-Function (GOF) research – a controversial scientific process that involves modifying viruses to better understand how they spread and evolve. The "goal" is to prepare for potential pandemics. Yet, some critics argue this kind of "tinkering" may have unintended consequences.

Historically, natural H5N1 infections rarely posed a direct threat to humans. But now, concerns are growing that a "mutated version" of the virus has emerged – one with "pandemic potential." The mutated virus is now spreading to other animals, particularly mammals, and the bird flu has now hit our milk supply – so it is time for quarantines, testing, and vaccines.

Let the Fear Mongering Begin!

Started in chickens ... now jumping to other mammals and dairy cows ... and fear mongering that it will soon jump to humans.

Last week, MSNBC aired a controversial statement from Mike Bloomberg,⁶ who urged Senators to block RFK Jr.'s nomination as Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS). Bloomberg argued that RFK Jr.'s opposition to pandemic vaccines could prevent the approval of "life-saving" bird flu vaccines. But are these fears warranted, or is the public being swept into unnecessary panic?

Mass Killing of Livestock

Between January 2022 and December 2024, 122,960,216 birds have been euthanized to "stop the spread" of bird flu.⁷ What if those were false positive tests?

Infected and exposed animals are often culled — a practice that has primarily impacted chickens in recent years but now, for the first time, includes dairy cows. While specific numbers of culled cows are not always detailed in public reports, the available information indicates that culling is a significant component of the response to H5N1 outbreaks in dairy herds.

This has led to challenges in managing carcass disposal, with some rendering plants struggling to keep up with the increased number of carcasses.

Again, what if these are false positive tests? Culling animals at the first sign of infection essentially ensures that natural immunity has no chance to develop. Here is a quote from Joel Salatin from 2023:

"But by culling animals whenever a case is detected basically guarantees that natural immunity will never develop. The parallels between HPAI expert orthodoxy and COVID orthodoxy are too numerous to mention ... The HPAI worry feeds food worry, which makes people clamor for government security. People will accept just about anything if they're afraid ..."

As we move forward, it is vitally important for you to keep an eye on the narratives we're being fed. If bird flu becomes a human epidemic or pandemic, there are plenty of reasons to suspect it's a weaponized virus, and the 'solution' offered will be the same as that for COVID-19: 'Get vaccinated.'"

The Impact on the Food Supply

Large-scale livestock culling can have a profound impact on the food supply. After all, you can't just snap your fingers and — boom — a new chicken or cow appears.

There is currently a nationwide egg shortage in the United States, primarily due to a significant outbreak of avian influenza (bird flu). This outbreak has led to the loss of

millions of egg-laying hens, resulting in decreased egg production and increased prices.

Is the nation's milk supply next? A drop in milk production wouldn't just affect what's in your glass – it also means less butter, cream, cheese, yogurt, and other dairy products on shelves. A combination of false positive tests, mass culling, and quarantines could lead to a huge reduction to the nation's milk supply – hindering our ability to access nutritious food.

One example is Raw Farm in California, which is currently not allowed to distribute milk and has been temporarily shut down. Despite "no human bird flu cases associated with the product have been confirmed to date," the California Public Health Department has recalled all Raw Farm brand milk and cream on store shelves in the state of California since the milk and cream tested positive for bird flu.

The farm is under quarantine, preventing it from distributing any new batches of its raw milk, cream, kefir, butter and cheese products. The California Public Health department said that the overall risk to the public remains low, but that quarantining will help "retain" the issue.



DEAR CUSTOMERS AND MEDIA

OUR FAMILY AND TEAM IS PROUD TO BE WORKING EXTREMELY HARD TO RESUME FULL SUPPLY AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. WE HAVE PAUSED PRODUCTION WHILE OUR HERD IS UNDER QUARANTINE.

THERE ARE NO ILLNESSES ASSOCIATED WITH H5NI IN OUR PRODUCTS, BUT RATHER THIS IS A POLITICAL ISSUE. THERE ARE NO FOOD SAFETY ISSUES WITH OUR PRODUCTS OR CONSUMER SAFETY. WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS RESOLVING THIS POLITICAL ISSUE WHILE BEING COOPERATIVE WITH OUR GOVERNMENT REGULATORY AGENCIES.

There have been ZERO cases where someone got bird flu by drinking raw milk. Is this bird flu "pandemic" an attempt to obtain complete control of the food system?

"Who controls the food supply controls the people." – Henry Kissinger

The War on Raw Milk

Are FDA regulators using bird flu as an excuse to take action against raw milk? "What they don't want is for raw milk to thrive, and that's a political decision they made years ago," Mark McAfee at Raw Farm said of the FDA. "It's a new angle to try and discourage us."⁸

None of McAfee's cows (at Raw Farm) had flu symptoms before their milk tested positive, and he noted that no human cases of bird flu have been linked to consuming raw milk. All the more reason, he said, to look with skepticism at the "long-term plan to make sure raw milk doesn't come back."

Government regulators are warning against raw milk consumption due to bird flu concerns, yet they admit there hasn't been a single documented case of anyone contracting bird flu from drinking it.

Health officials in California are currently warning against raw milk consumption after a child there was suspected to have contracted bird flu⁹ after consuming raw milk. However, in an updated report, the child tested negative for bird flu.¹⁰

Unnecessary Fear?

A systemic review for North America has documented a higher risk of hospitalization and death from listeriosis associated with pasteurized, not raw, milk.¹¹

On top of this, no virus is known to be transmitted through raw milk.¹² And that is according to recent CDC data for all foodborne illnesses from 2005 to 2020. The CDC dataset includes 3,807 milkborne illnesses (2,111 of which is associated with pasteurized milk).¹³ All were linked to bacterial pathogens – not one viral illness was associated with milk, raw or pasteurized.

On top of that, raw milk has numerous antiviral properties from the many bioactive compounds.¹⁴ "The available evidence does not support the assumption of zero risk for pasteurized milk nor the assumption of an increasing trend in the burden of illness after a change in state legal status for raw milk."¹⁵

It is unlikely that raw milk could transmit bird flu to the people who drink it, as no virus is known to be transmitted through raw milk.

Even the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) admits, "we do not know at this time if the HPAI [highly pathogenic avian influenza; bird flu] H5N1 virus can be transmitted to humans through consumption of raw milk and products made from raw milk from infected cows," but it insisted that states "stop the sale of raw milk that may present a risk to consumers."¹⁶

can a dairy cow pass H5N1 into the milk?



No, a dairy cow cannot pass H5N1 (a strain of avian influenza) into its milk. H5N1 is highly specific to birds and has very limited ability to infect mammals, including cows. Here's why this transmission is highly improbable:

Faulty Testing?

Just like with COVID, government agencies are relying on PCR tests as they ramp up testing for bird flu. But PCR tests are extremely inaccurate and lead to significant levels of false positives.¹⁷

PCR testing works by replicating tiny fragments of DNA or RNA until they become large enough to identify. The fragments are replicated in cycles, and each cycle doubles the amount of genetic material in the sample. The number of cycles required to create an identifiable sample is the "cycle threshold" (CT). A high CT means many cycles were required to "detect" a virus.

In December 2020, even the WHO warned that using a high CT would lead to false-positive results. Moreover, Kary Mullis, who won the Nobel Prize for inventing the PCR test, has said it is inappropriate to use the test as a diagnostic tool to detect a viral infection.¹⁸

Yet the government is mass producing and encouraging PCR testing with no reporting on CTs. A big part of the CDC's new \$93 million plan to reduce the impact of bird flu involves testing.¹⁹ The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) did not respond to "The Defender's" inquiry about which CTs are used to test animals for bird flu.²⁰

False positives can help them spread fear, encourage vaccinations, and mandate the mass killing of cattle herds or chicken flocks. The FDA has found bird flu in raw milk using PCR testing, but there was no mention of the Cycle Threshold in this report.²¹

However, the FDA did create a testing protocol on August 22, 2024 that required raw milk is tested for bird flu using a PCR test with a cycle threshold of 45²² – which is pretty much guaranteed to produce false-positives.²³

High cycle threshold values (over 35) typically indicate very low levels of viral RNA from degraded, noninfectious fragments. Potential background noise or contamination may also produce false positives.

Another issue with the PCR test is its inability to differentiate between infectious and noninfectious viruses. While cows infected with bird flu stop shedding live virus after about 12 days, they can continue to shed non-viable viral fragments for weeks or even months.²⁴

Are Vaccines on the Horizon?

As of December 11, 2024, the U.S. administration has no plans to authorize the distribution of avian influenza (bird flu) vaccines. While officials continue to monitor the outbreak, they maintain that a vaccine isn't currently necessary since the virus isn't spreading among people or causing severe illness.

However, there are preparations "in place." The National Pre-Pandemic Influenza Vaccine Stockpile, managed by the Department of Health and Human Services, holds enough bulk antigens to produce vaccines against flu viruses with pandemic potential. This stockpile could supply enough H5N1 vaccine doses to immunize critical care workers and at-risk populations, with the capacity to produce millions more within weeks.

Additionally, the federal government has two bird flu vaccine candidates in limited quantities within the stockpile. These vaccines, however, would require authorization from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) before they could be deployed.

"BARDA (Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority) and vaccine manufacturers GSK and CSL Seqirus already are conducting trials on updated H5 vaccines in adults and expect to have data ready next year. Officials said vaccine trials will include children contingent on funding.

BARDA's goal in the event of a pandemic is to deliver the first doses of pandemic vaccine within three months of a pandemic declaration, and to have sufficient supply to meet public demand within four months of a declaration and enough for the entire U.S. population within six months of a declaration."²⁵



FDA lays out process to update bird flu vaccines in preparation for pandemic

October 10, 2024

Federal Testing Mandates

Remember mandatory COVID testing? Well, it's back – this time for milk, with mandatory testing for bird flu.

As of December 16, 2024, U.S. federal agencies have issued their first mandatory H5N1 bird flu testing protocols in California, Colorado, Michigan, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, and Oregon – with plans to expand to all states.

Entities involved in the dairy supply chain – including dairy farms, bulk milk transporters, transfer stations, and dairy processing facilities that send or hold milk for pasteurization – will now be required to provide samples upon request.

Herd owners with cattle that test positive must also supply epidemiological data to assist with contact tracing and disease surveillance efforts. Additionally, private labs and state veterinarians are mandated to report any positive test results for bird flu in raw milk samples to the USDA.

It will certainly be interesting to see how all of this pans out with the transition to the new administration.

What You Can Do

Moral of the story – whenever you can, buy from farmers or cooperatives directly and reduce your reliance on their system. These type of food systems support small-scale, toxin free farming.

The centralization of the food system and shift in farming styles has been somewhat successful in benefiting the big corporations and maintaining food control, while hurting farmers. The size of farms has increased, while the number of farms has shrunk (opposite of what we want for low toxin, nutrient-dense food production.)

In fact, the number of small farms has decreased by over 72% in the last 90 years – in 1935 there were 6.8 million farms, and in 2023 there were 1.89 million farms.

"It is very hard as a farmer to be profitable in the conventional system, so more and more farms are going out of business. And many farms that are in business require an off the farm job to pay the bills."

We are losing small scale farmers more and more each year, and they need your support to stay in business! The prices may be more expensive, but farmers are paid a fair wage and produce higher quality food products.

Plus, with these type of transactions, the big agriculture companies get \$0 of this sale, funneling less money into their system. And on top of that, remain grounded and maintain common sense as we head into the next round of bird flu fearmongering.

About the Author

Ashley Armstrong is passionate about optimizing metabolic health through quality food. Armstrong is a co-founder of Angel Acres Egg Co., which specializes in low-PUFA (polyunsaturated fat) eggs that are shipped to all 50 states ([eggs restocked every](#)

Friday), and **Nourish Cooperative**, which ships low-PUFA pork, low-PUFA chicken, beef, A2 cheese, A2 dairy and traditional sourdough to all 50 states.

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