# Dcfrn-~1Developing Countries Farm Radio Network

# Package 79, Script 7

November 2006

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Biosecurity – A New Way to Look at Avian Flu Prevention

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**Notes to Broadcaster**

In countries around the world, a highly contagious disease called avian influenza, also known as bird flu, has resulted in the death of millions of farm and wild birds, including chickens, ducks, turkeys, and guinea fowl. Either the disease has killed the birds outright, or birds have been killed in an effort to stop the further spread of the infection. This has had a devastating effect on farming families who rely on poultry for income and for food. Avian influenza can in some cases be spread to humans. Though this occurrence is fairly unlikely, it is estimated that, as of October 2006, almost 150 people have died from the human form of avian influenza. Thus, it is important not only to take precautions to keep poultry safe, but to keep oneself and one’s family safe.

The message of the following spots is that, for both families and communities, prevention is the best defence against avian influenza. The spots also highlight the fact that prevention is easily accomplished by practicing good hygiene around poultry and poultry products, and by using reliable methods to stop the spread of the disease.

**Characters:**

**Host**

Farmer

**Host:** Good morning [afternoon, or evening]. I'm your host, [\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]. Today we're going to talk to [*farmer’s name*]about how [*he/she*] keeps [*his/her*] chickens and [*his/her*] home safe from disease. Good morning [afternoon, or evening] and welcome, [*farmer’s name*]**.**

**Farmer:** Good morning [afternoon, or evening].

**Host:** Let's start right in. First, I have been hearing a lot about bird flu. What can you tell us about bird flu? Why all this fuss?

**Farmer: Well, bird flu is a serious disease that has caused a lot of problems for poultry farmers all over the world. Many millions of birds have been infected and have had to be destroyed. Some people who work closely with infected poultry have been getting sick too, and a number of them have even died. But you know, I think these situations might be prevented if we take biosecurity precautions on the farm.**

**Host:** Biosecurity? What is this?

**Farmer:** When people talk about biosecurity, they’re really talking about keeping disease out of the farm and about stopping it from spreading to other farms. ‘Keep It Out, Keep it In’ - that’s the way you might want to think about it! Keep it out of your farm. And, if your farm is infected, keep it in! Don’t spread it. An important thing about biosecurity is that all farmers must be involved for it to be really effective and keep disease from spreading.

**Host:** What are some biosecurity practices you use?

**Farmer:** For me, one of the most important things is to control access to the areas where I keep my chickens. For example, I don’t let other farmers who own chickens come near my coop. I have also put up a fence to try and keep other people out, especially any of the children in the area that might want to come and play near the chicken coop.

**Host: That’s a good idea! [*Laughing*] I know my children like to get into everything.**

**Farmer:** It’s true. But children are more vulnerable to becoming infected with bird flu when they play near sick birds or their droppings. And unfortunately I’ve heard that many of the people getting sick or dying are children.

**Host:** So does this bird flu virus spread very easily?

**Farmer:** Well, it spreads easily from bird to bird. This is why, if a few birds get it, you have to kill the whole flock. It survives quite well in cool, moist conditions, like bird droppings. That’s why I like to keep a separate pair of boots that I wear only when I’m working in the chicken coop. This way, if I have any infected dirt or droppings on my shoes, the infection will stay in one area and not spread to the house or other parts of the farm. And when I leave the chicken coop, I always make sure to clean my hands and any tools I’ve been using.

**Host: Do you use** any specific soaps or disinfectants?

**Farmer:** No, I just use regular soap and water. Regular soap and water kills the bird flu virus. But you have to make sure you get all of the dirt off so there’s no chance of contamination. In fact, sometimes I just let my boots soak in soapy water. I give them a little bath.

**Host: Do you have any more suggestions for farmers**?

**Farmer:** Another important tip for farmers is to keep their birds from coming into contact with wild birds. Some scientists think that migrating birds are spreading bird flu all around the world.

**Host:** But there is no bird flu problem in this country [*note to broadcaster: check on the situation in your country*]*.* So why do we need to worry about this now?

**Farmer:** Ah! This is exactly the reason why we should start now! Biosecurity really means keeping your birds safe and *preventing* them from getting sick. That’s what we mean by the phrase ‘Keep it Out’. If all poultry farmers practice good biosecurity, then they have a better chance of keeping bird flu *out* of their farms and *out* of the country.

**Host:** Well, you've certainly shared some good strategies for biosecurity on the farm.

**Farmer: Thank you, I’m happy to help. The last comment I would like to make is that m**ost of these biosecurity measures are really quite easy and cost almost nothing. When you compare the costs involved in cleaning up after an outbreak, or losing your entire flock to disease, biosecurity and prevention really are the best and the cheapest solutions.

**Host: OK, l**et me sum up your message quickly. To start with, you told us about the dangers of bird flu, and how biosecurity measures can help prevent the disease from becoming a problem on the farm. Then you said that controlling access to chickens by putting up fences is important to stop the disease from coming on or off the farm. You also talked about cleaning your boots to kill any diseases that might be present. Finally, you told us that farmers should try to prevent their poultry from coming into contact with wild birds. **I suppose it’s important that farmers report any illnesses in their birds to the agricultural authorities, right?**

**Farmer: Absolutely, that’s always good advice.** That way, if there is an outbreak of bird flu, we can stop it quickly before it spreads.

**Host:** Thanks very much [*farmer’s name*], for talking to us about biosecurity. You certainly have given us a lot to think about.

**Farmer:** You're very welcome.

**Host:** This is your host [\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_], saying good morning [afternoon, or evening].

## Acknowledgements

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