



Steven W. Troxler
Commissioner

North Carolina Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services
Veterinary Division

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State Veterinarian

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To: Live Poultry Dealers in NC

The N.C. Division of Public Health and the N.C. Division of Agriculture and Consumer Services are asking stores that sell or display chicks, ducklings, and other live poultry to help educate their employees and the public about certain health risks associated with handling of these birds. Additionally, we request you provide point of sale education regarding the baby chicks and salmonella infections by taking one or more of the following actions:

- Directing customers to your corporate website
- Directing customers to the Centers of Disease and Prevention website:
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/SalmonellaBabyBirds/>
- Distributing copies of the enclosed educational posters to all persons who purchase baby poultry

Contact with poultry can cause illness in people with a germ called *Salmonella*. These illnesses linked to contact with live poultry have been well documented. Poultry can carry *Salmonella* germs and still appear healthy and clean. These germs can contaminate a bird's body and anything in the area where they are displayed or housed. During 2018, there were 334 reported human cases of *Salmonella* illness linked to backyard poultry. This includes 56 hospitalizations. Thirty-six of those cases were in North Carolina residents.

While raising backyard poultry can be a great experience, it is important that feed store employees do some simple things to help protect themselves and their customers:

- **Provide point of sale education regarding baby chicks and salmonella infection**
- Place the included color educational posters in clear view near areas where birds are displayed.
- Display birds out of reach of customers, especially children, so customers cannot easily touch birds.
- Offer hand-washing stations or hand sanitizer next to poultry display areas and tell customers to wash hands right after leaving the poultry display area.
- Clean and disinfect bird display enclosures between shipments of birds to prevent the spread of disease.

Feed stores can play an important role in educating the public on how to safely enjoy their backyard poultry. Thank you for your help in sharing these messages with your customers and your community. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns please call Nicole Lee at (919)-733-3419.

Sincerely,

Carl Williams, DVM, DACVPM
State Public Health Veterinarian
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