Western Canadian Animal Health Network

WeCAHN POULTRY NETWORK PRODUCER SUMMARY

APRIL - JUNE 2026

The WeCAHN Poultry network held a quarterly videoconference meeting on September 17 th 2026. The network members discussed the animal health events from April to June, 2026. Veterinary practitioners, diagnosticians, veterinary college faculty, public veterinarians, researchers, and industry representatives attended the meeting. Data sources include: Clinical Impressions Surveys completed by network practitioners; data shared by western veterinary diagnostic laboratories: Manitoba Veterinary Diagnostic Services (VDS) laboratory, Prairie Diagnostic Services (PDS) laboratory, University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Diagnostic Services Unit (UCVM DSU); and, for the first time, the British Columbia Animal Health Centre (AHC), and scan of poultry surveillance reported by other sources.

1) Syndromic Surveillance

Poultry health surveillance for producers

This report summarizes veterinary observations and laboratory findings from Q2 2025 to Q2 2026. Participation in the veterinary surveys was limited, so findings may reflect individual practices rather than the entire industry. BC laboratory results were added in Q2 2026, increasing the number of cases captured. Many laboratory submissions lacked production-type information, limiting comparisons between poultry sectors.



Broilers

Bacterial infections and bacterial lameness remained major concerns. Early infections and yolk sac infections persisted, while bacterial lameness, infections later in production, and condemnations associated with cellulitis became more prominent. Laboratory findings confirmed ongoing bloodstream infections, including those caused by *E. coli*. Some bacterial isolates were resistant to multiple antibiotics. Increased laboratory detection of enterococcal bacteria occurred alongside increasing lameness, but these findings have not been linked at the individual flock level.

Inclusion body hepatitis (IBH) remained the strongest digestive disease concern. Veterinarians continued to report IBH and increasing disease activity, although diagnoses at one laboratory declined after late 2025. Coccidiosis persisted and increased in some practices. Variant infectious bursal disease virus also remained a concern.

Respiratory disease was generally stable, with occasional air sac inflammation. Heart failure and fluid accumulation in the abdomen continued to occur. Producers should pay particular attention to **early chick deaths, yolk sac infections, increasing lameness, IBH-related mortality, cellulitis condemnations, and infections that respond poorly to treatment**.



Broiler breeders

Bacterial disease remained an ongoing problem, including early chick infections, yolk sac infections, bloodstream infections during lay, and bacterial lameness. Bloodstream infections during lay increased in early 2026 before moderating in Q2. Peritonitis, or inflammation within the abdominal cavity, emerged in late 2025 and persisted into 2026.

Laboratory findings confirmed bacterial bloodstream infections. Multidrug-resistant *E. coli* and intermittent *Salmonella* detections remained concerns. Bacterial lameness persisted, including suspected *Staphylococcus*-associated disease, without a consistent recent increase across practices.

Respiratory disease remained limited, although sporadic *Mycoplasma* activity included a report of increasing disease. There was no sustained increase in egg-production or egg-quality problems attributed to infectious bronchitis virus. Producers should watch for **recurring early mortality, lameness, infections during lay, peritonitis, and respiratory changes**, with continued attention to bacterial transmission through the breeder–hatchery system.

Layers

Peritonitis and salpingitis, or inflammation of the abdominal cavity and oviduct, were the main disease concerns. These problems showed increasing activity in 2026, alongside unexplained declines in egg production. Laboratory chicken submissions included related reproductive disease, although production type was not consistently recorded.

Aggression, cannibalism, and hysteria were also prominent concerns, with intermittent increases. Laboratory-confirmed *E. coli* disease included an outbreak with high mortality and reproductive involvement.

Respiratory disease remained minimal. An isolated infectious laryngotracheitis (ILT) report did not establish an increasing trend. Coccidiosis showed a possible recent increase, while osteoporosis showed no sustained increase. Producers should pay attention to **unexplained production losses, reproductive disease, injuries associated with flock behaviour, and increased mortality.**

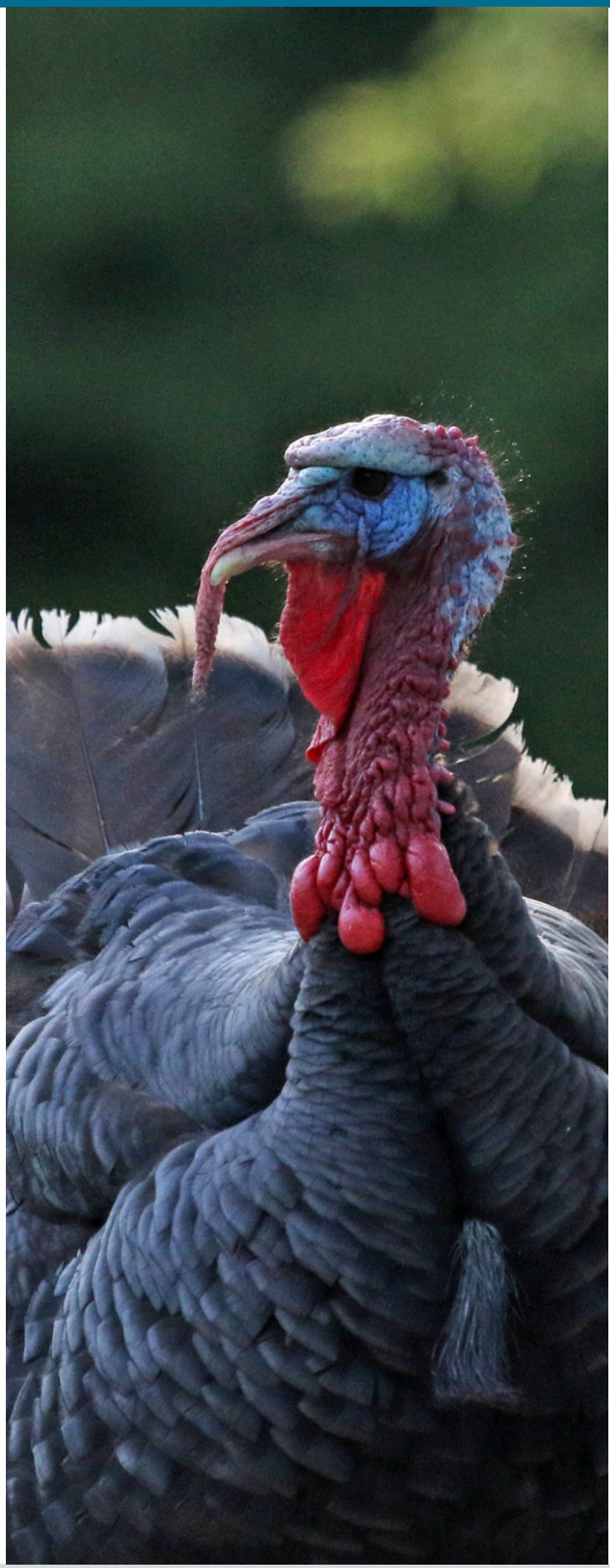
Turkeys

Persistent intestinal inflammation and ongoing bacterial disease were the main findings to follow.Veterinarians reported intermittent bloodstream and yolk sac infections. Laboratory diagnoses included enterococcal bacteria, liver disease, and *E. coli* infections. Continued detection of different *Salmonella* types remained a concern, although no uniform trend was identified. Influenza detections resumed.

Respiratory problems were intermittent, including fungal disease, ornithobacteriosis (ORT), bacterial pneumonia, and air sac infections. No sustained respiratory increase was identified. Reovirus-associated tendon inflammation was intermittent in 2025 and was not reported clinically in the 2026 quarters. Heart problems and aortic rupture also occurred. Producers should monitor **persistent intestinal disease, early mortality, bacterial infections, respiratory illness, and cardiovascular causes of death**.

Small flock health

Small-flock observations covered a shorter period. *Mycoplasma* and ILT were more prominent than in commercial flocks. Peritonitis, ovarian cancer, Marek's disease, predation, and localized bacterial lameness were also reported. Producers should pay attention to **respiratory illness, recurring reproductive problems, lameness, and unexplained deaths**. Comprehensive reports are available in the smallholders network.





3) Scan of emerging and important diseases

Highly pathogenic avian influenza remained a concern across poultry sectors. Commercial flock detections resumed in Manitoba and Alberta in September following the summer pause. Poultry and dairy detections also resumed in the United States. Canadian dairy cows remained free of HPAI.



Producer takeaways

1. **Bacterial infections and lameness remained concerns**. Broilers had ongoing early infections, increasing lameness, and more processing losses from skin infections. Antibiotic-resistant E. coli remained a breeder concern.
2. **Inclusion body hepatitis continued to affect broilers**. Infectious bursal disease remained present, and some practices reported increasing coccidiosis.
3. **Reproductive infections persisted**. Breeders had ongoing bloodstream and abdominal infections. Layers experienced increasing abdominal and oviduct infections, alongside unexplained egg-production losses.
4. **Respiratory disease remained generally stable**. No clinical IBV, occasional Mycoplasma, ILT, and turkey respiratory problems continued.
5. **Avian influenza remained a key risk**. Poultry detections resumed in Manitoba, Alberta, and the United States. No infections had been detected in Canadian cattle, and milk testing remained negative.

Financial support was provided under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.