



Consumer Federation of America

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CFA Releases “Consumer Guide to Avian Influenza” Brochure

Consumer Federation of America’s Food Policy Institute today released a free brochure designed to provide consumers with factual information about avian influenza. The brochure differentiates between avian influenza, a disease that kills birds and pandemic influenza, which spreads among humans. The brochure also emphasizes that the chances of consumers contracting avian influenza is minimal.

“It’s important for consumers to be able to distinguish between avian influenza and pandemic influenza,” Chris Waldrop, Deputy Director for the Food Policy Institute said. “One affects birds, the other affects humans. They’re not the same thing.”

Avian influenza (AI) is a virus that causes respiratory infections in both wild and domestic birds, including poultry. AI virus types are grouped into two categories, based on their ability to cause illness: low pathogenic AI, which often does not make the infected birds sick; and high pathogenic AI, which causes the most deadly outbreaks in bird flocks.

While the chance of consumers in the United States contracting avian influenza is minimal, it is still important for consumers to practice safe food handling practices when handling raw poultry.

Pandemic influenza could occur if a strain of avian influenza, or even another type of influenza virus to which people have no immunity, mutated so that it could spread efficiently from one person to another.

A PDF version of “A Consumer Guide to Avian Influenza” is available online at: http://www.consumerfed.org/pdfs/CFA_AI_Brochure.pdf. Additional copies can be obtained by contacting Chris Waldrop via email at cwaldrop@consumerfed.org or via phone at 202-797-8551.

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Consumer Federation of America is a non-profit association of 300 consumer groups, representing more than 50 million Americans. It was established in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, education and advocacy. The Food Policy Institute at CFA works to promote a safer, healthier and more affordable food supply.

