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## **Pilgrim's Pride Corporation Current Statement Regarding Avian Influenza**

The type of avian influenza that has been reported in parts of Asia and Europe known as highly pathogenic H5N1 was first identified in Hong Kong in 1997. It has continued to be present in various parts of Asia since that time; however, there is no history of this virus occurring in the United States, and it is not in this country now.

While a limited number of humans in Asia have contracted H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza, this is still a very rare occurrence, and scientists believe that these individuals contracted the virus through direct contact with infected birds or through raw poultry consumption patterns not practiced in the United States.

Conditions in the U.S. poultry industry are radically different from those in Asia and Eastern Europe, where there are numerous free-range growing operations, the common presence of backyard flocks in areas of the general population, the sale of live chickens directly to consumers, and live birds cohabitating with high-density human populations.

The fact remains that H5N1 is not currently spreading in long chains from person to person in Asia. In fact, according to the CDC, the spread of the H5N1 virus from person to person has been rare and has not continued beyond one person.

Most importantly, consumers located in areas of the world where this avian influenza virus has been identified need to understand that there is no danger of acquiring the virus from eating normally and properly cooked poultry.

Our top priority at Pilgrim's Pride is to provide a safe, nutritious, affordable product for consumers, and to ensure the health and well being of our flocks, employees and contract growers. Pilgrim's Pride consistently practices stringent biosecurity measures, conducts regular testing, and takes necessary precautions aimed at keeping avian influenza out of our flocks and insuring the health and well being of our customers, employees and growers.

For further information on avian influenza, please visit [www.avianinfluenza.info](http://www.avianinfluenza.info).

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