

Preventing Infectious Laryngotracheitis



Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT) is an infectious disease of poultry. Both commercial and backyard flocks are susceptible to infection. ILT is present in Nova Scotia and is a notifiable disease under the Animal Health and Protection Regulations.

How is the disease spread?

ILT is a viral respiratory disease spread by:

- Aerosol
- Direct contact with infected chickens
- Contaminated equipment, clothing, boots, and poultry litter

Risk to flocks

ILT causes severe disease, death, and production losses:

- ILT is not treatable
- Many infected birds die
- Some birds recover within 7 to 10 days
- Recovered birds become latent carriers:
 - They become a lifelong source of the virus
 - They may infect other birds even when they appear normal
 - The disease may reappear when the birds are stressed



Control measures

Control is best achieved through appropriate biosecurity measures, including vaccination of eggs and day old chicks. These measures protect your flock from ILT and other common poultry diseases. Control measures also prevent disease spread in the province.

Vaccination is most effective when done in eggs or day old chicks. Other vaccines are available but have the potential to cause disease and create carriers. Consult your veterinarian for more information.

Clinical signs of the disease

- Discharge from the nose and eyes
- Laboured breathing, coughing, sneezing, head shaking
- Bloody mucus may be seen in severe cases where birds have been coughing

Report cases to the Chief Veterinary Office

ILT is a **notifiable disease** in Nova Scotia. Cases must be reported to the Chief Veterinary Officer in writing within 24 hours. Notification no longer triggers depopulation of the flock. You will be contacted by Nova Scotia Agriculture to discuss best management and control measures for your flock.

Chief Veterinary Officer

Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture
PO Box 890 (Hancock Bldg.),
Truro, NS B2N 5G6
Tel: (902) 893-6540
Email: AnimalHealthLab@novascotia.ca

Risk to humans

None. ILT poses no human health risks.

Recommended Biosecurity

Register with the Nova Scotia Premises ID program

This is a free program for all livestock and poultry owners. The program allows for traceability information to be accessed quickly for the protection of animal and public health. More information on this program can be found at

<https://novascotia.ca/agri/programs-and-services/industry-protection/#PID>

Take care with new stock

The most common source of disease is from new stock:

- Be aware that ILT and some other diseases can be present in apparently healthy birds with no history of disease
- Obtain birds and eggs from reliable sources and, if possible, from a single source
- Consider buying only fertilized eggs or commercial vaccinated chicks
- Choose disease-free sources. However, a flock without a history of disease does not mean the flock is safe. The disease status of backyard flocks is typically unknown.
- Keep birds of the same age, if possible, or group birds by age

Quarantine new or returning birds

This helps prevent many diseases. Note that birds with ILT may not have clinical signs even through a quarantine period and may still be a risk.

- Quarantine new or returning birds for 2 to 4 weeks before mixing with your flock
- Quarantine in a separate building to prevent direct bird-to-bird contact
- Observe birds for abnormal behavior
- Handle quarantined birds last using separate clothing and equipment

Monitor bird health

Contact your veterinarian if you observe any of the following:

- Birds appear sick
- Mortality is high
- Egg quality or production drops suddenly

Dead birds may be submitted to The Nova Scotia Animal Health Laboratory in Truro for post-mortem examinations:

Nova Scotia Animal Health Laboratory

Hancock Veterinary Building
(Dalhousie Agricultural Campus)
65 River Road, Bible Hill,
Nova Scotia B2N 2P3

Tel: (902) 893-6540

Email: AnimalHealthLab@novascotia.ca

Maintain poultry housing and yard

- Clean and disinfect the flock area or pen at least once each year.
- Clean and sanitize drinkers regularly

Discourage pests and rodents

- Keep the area around pens free of debris
- Cut the grass short
- Drain standing water
- Keep feed in tightly closed containers
- Clean up spilled feed promptly

Maintain personal hygiene

- Use dedicated clothing and footwear for working around the flock
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after working with the flock

Manage risk through workflow

- Work with youngest birds first
- Handle sick or quarantined birds last





Restrict access to your flock

- Post biosecurity signs
- Restrict visitors
- Ensure that necessary visitors or service personnel
 - wear clean footwear and coveralls
 - follow personal hygiene procedures

Manage risk caused by equipment

- Do not share equipment with other poultry owners
- Regularly clean and disinfect equipment that comes into contact with poultry

Keep accurate records

- Source of birds
- Health concerns
- Vaccination history

Follow a biosecurity plan

- Create a biosecurity plan
- Update your plan regularly