

Inactivated Newcastle disease vaccine shortage

There is currently a limited volume of inactivated Newcastle disease vaccine in Australia; additional supplies are not expected until April 2020 (based on advice Feb 20).

Newcastle disease

Newcastle disease is a viral disease of domestic poultry and wild birds characterised by gastrointestinal, respiratory and nervous signs.

Australia is free from virulent Newcastle disease, but this has not always been the case.

Newcastle disease vaccination program

The goal is to mitigate the risk of an outbreak of Australian-origin Newcastle disease.

Vaccination in all states and territories is in accordance with the nationally agreed Newcastle disease vaccination program – standard operating procedures, available at <https://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/what-we-do/endemic-disease/newcastle-disease/>.

	Age of birds at vaccination ¹	New South Wales
Layer breeders	2-4 weeks, and	Live V4, and
	12-18 weeks	Inactivated Newcastle disease vaccine
Meat breeders	2-4 weeks, and	Live V4, and
	12-18 weeks, or	Inactivated Newcastle disease vaccine, or
	12-18 weeks and every 6 to 8 weeks thereafter	Live V4
Laying hens and pullets (grown in cages during the vaccination program)	2-4 weeks, and	Live V4, and
	6-8 weeks, and	Live V4, and

	Age of birds at vaccination ¹	New South Wales
	10-14 weeks ²	Inactivated Newcastle disease vaccine
Laying hens and pullets (grown on litter/ground during the vaccination program)	2-4 weeks ³ , and	Live V4, and
	10-14 weeks ⁴	Inactivated Newcastle disease vaccine
Meat chickens	Day-old, or	Live V4 as coarse spray ⁵ , or
	7-14 days	Live V4 in drinking water

¹ Additional vaccination may be permitted (for example, in day-olds).

² A gap of 4 -6 weeks between the last V4 and inactivated Newcastle disease vaccine is the optimal interval. For example, to be able to vaccinate with inactivated Newcastle disease vaccine at 10 weeks of age, V4 should have been given no later than 6 weeks of age.

³ Guidance: In case of multi-age rearing of birds, it is recommended to vaccinate closer to 2 weeks.

⁴ If there is evidence of haemagglutination inhibition titres lower than 2³ prior to administration of inactivated vaccine, additional live V4 should be introduced between 6-8 weeks of age for subsequent flocks.

⁵ For two of the three available vaccines, this route is currently not a registered product label claim and therefore requires off-label use permission by a registered veterinarian who is supervising these flocks.

NSW Biosecurity Regulation

The owner of a commercial flock of domestic chickens must ensure that the chickens are vaccinated in accordance with the national *Newcastle disease vaccination program – standard operating procedures* published by Animal Health Australia.

A commercial flock of chickens means 1000 or more chickens that are managed as a group.

Note: Newcastle disease is a prohibited matter under Part 4 of the *NSW Biosecurity Act 2015*.

Protocol while inactivated Newcastle disease vaccine is in short supply/unavailable

- Notify NSW Department of Primary Industries at animal.biosecurity@dpi.nsw.gov.au if you are unable to vaccinate in accordance with mandatory requirements under NSW legislation
- Use available live vaccine to vaccinate birds in NSW in accordance with the vaccination programs for Meat Breeders in NSW, as detailed in the table above and in the *Newcastle disease vaccination program – standard operating procedures* published by Animal Health Australia.
- Prioritise the use of remaining inactivated vaccine as part of the approved vaccination program for NSW in Mangrove Mountain NSW and the Central Coast local government region, as this is a high risk area for virulent Newcastle disease.
- Prioritise the use of remaining inactivated vaccine as part of the currently approved vaccination program for NSW for the vaccination of breeding stock (grandparents and parents stock).

- Ensure biosecurity is optimal to minimise the risk of Newcastle disease introduction or spread to other flocks.
- Vaccinate domestic chicken flocks with 1000+ birds in accordance with the vaccination program for NSW detailed in the nationally agreed *Newcastle disease vaccination program – standard operating procedures* as soon as inactivated vaccine is available again.

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