# Author and Journalist Eric Schlosser Warns of Potential Pandemic Originating from American Farms



Eric Schlosser, an author and environmental journalist, highlighted concerns about a potential pandemic originating from American farms during an appearance on Bill Maher's "Real Time" show. Schlosser, known for his book "Fast Food Nation," pointed to Texas, where bird flu (H5N1) has reportedly jumped species, infecting cows—a first of its kind occurrence in the state. This outbreak has sparked worries about the virus entering the human food supply through meat and dairy products.

The spread of H5N1 has prompted reaction from U.S. health agencies, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The CDC has acknowledged the pandemic potential of avian flu viruses and is monitoring the situation closely, especially after identifying 70 people in Colorado at risk of exposure. Meanwhile, FDA Chief Commissioner Dr. Robert Califf has reported that preparations are underway for testing, drugs, and vaccines should the virus spread further. However, he also noted that the risk to humans remains low at this moment.

A critical concern is the virus's mutation as it passes between species, potentially increasing its likelihood of human infection. To date, only one person—a farmer in Texas—has been confirmed infected with the H5N1 virus during this outbreak, with no reported cases of human-to-human transmission. Nonetheless, the USDA has observed significant genetic mutations in the virus, which is already present in 36 farms across nine states.

Safety measures are in place for food products, as officials assure that virus particles found in items like milk and cheese are neutralized through pasteurization processes, posing no risk to consumers.

Schlosser also criticized the concentrated nature of the agriculture and food industries, suggesting that the lack of transparency and diversity in the sector poses additional public health risks. He emphasized the harmful impacts of ultra-processed foods containing artificial ingredients, which have been associated with various health issues.