# USDA Study Shows Bird Flu Virus Can Survive in Rare Cooked Meat, Raising Transmission Concerns



The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has revealed that the H5N1 avian influenza virus, commonly known as bird flu, can survive in meat cooked rare. In a recent study, USDA scientists found live traces of a substitute bird flu virus in hamburgers cooked at 120 degrees Fahrenheit. The findings raise concerns about the potential for rare and raw meat to act as a transmission route for the virus.

According to the USDA, no virus was detected in burgers cooked to 145 degrees (medium rare) or 160 degrees (well done). This information, presented at a press briefing, was initially not fully disclosed until pressed by journalists. The virus has so far only been identified in dairy herds in the US, but some dairy cattle are repurposed for beef, often used in low-quality ground beef such as that found in fast-food chains.

Consumer safety recommendations from the USDA advise cooking ground beef to 160 degrees Fahrenheit to prevent infections from bacteria like salmonella or E.Coli. However, varying cooking practices persist, hence the need for comprehensive study results to inform public decisions.

Dr. Krutika Kuppalli, from the Infectious Disease Society of America, emphasized the importance of transparency for public trust regarding food safety.