



Statewide Ban on Poultry and Dairy Cattle Exhibitions Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

(Poultry, Dairy, Other Livestock, and General)

AVIAN/POULTRY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Which types of birds does the ban affect at exhibitions, shows, or fairs?

The ban is intended to address the highest risk bird species related to avian influenza. This ban will affect chickens, turkeys, ducks, and upland game birds (i.e. pheasants, chukars). All other exhibitions, shows or sales with birds, including those with pigeons, psittacine, doves, Soft Bills, and Hookbills, will not be impacted by the ban at this time but are susceptible to the virus. At any exhibition or show we highly encourage careful observation and isolation of any apparently sick birds, good sanitation, and the implementation of measures that reduce the potential spread of any disease from bird to bird at these events.

Q. Does the ban apply to eggs or other egg exhibits, judging or sales?

No. Eggs are not currently included in the ban and do not apply to egg exhibitions, judging, or sales. Egg display disposal should follow good sanitation practices. For example, use disposable gloves to place eggs into a leakproof plastic bag, seal, and place into a secondary leakproof plastic bag, seal, and spray the outside of bag with a disinfectant such as Lysol, then dispose into a receptacle.

Q. Does the ban apply to incubator and/or hatching egg displays?

No. The heat used for these displays should inactivate the virus. The public should not have direct contact/access to hatching eggs or chicks. Hatched chicks should be observed for any health issues for 30 days. If any health concerns arise, contact the CDFA Sick Bird Hotline at 866-922-2473.

Q. Does the ban apply to poultry meat birds exhibited with a terminal sale?

Yes. Currently, the ban includes described poultry at fairs, shows, and exhibitions that have terminal sales. Contact cdfa.HPAInfo@cdfa.ca.gov for a current risk assessment in your area and to consider exemptions after March 1, 2025.

DAIRY COW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Which dairy cattle are affected by the ban?

The ban is intended to address the highest risk classes of cattle known to be associated with spreading H5N1 in California. While other classes of dairy cattle have been implicated in spread, the highest risk animals are bred cattle close to parturition (Springers), and lactating cows or recently dried off cows. While the role that replacement heifers play in spreading H5N1 needs further research, there is no reliable test to ensure they are not infected, and they





are higher risk because they normally move to a dairy or are co-housed with dairy destination animals. Therefore, the ban includes replacement heifers, especially bred heifers (Springers), and lactating or recently dried off adult cows. Dairy cattle breeds include Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, Holstein, Jersey, Guernsey, Milking Shorthorn, Red & Whites, and any cross bred dairy cattle. Hosting a dairy calving exhibit to the public at these facilities is prohibited.

Q. Does this ban apply to dairy bulls, feeder calves, and steers?

No, dairy bulls, feeder calves, and steers can be exhibited, as these classes of dairy cattle have not been strongly implicated in spreading H5N1 to dairies and generally are segregated or moved to harvest channels. Because these cattle may share equipment or facilities with dairy cows, careful observation and isolation of any apparently sick cattle, good sanitation, and the implementation of measures that reduce the potential spread of disease from animal to animal at these events remains important.

Q. Why are dairy cattle excluded from exhibitions when beef cattle are not?

The H5N1 virus thrives in cow milk and in the udders. This increases the risks of dairy cows over beef cows. Further, CDFA has no data suggesting that beef breeds have been infected or spread this virus, although more research related to breed susceptibility is needed. Finally, beef breeds generally move to harvest channels and not back to a dairy where they may spread disease. Because beef cattle may share equipment or facilities with dairy cows, careful observation and isolation of any apparently sick cattle, good sanitation, and the implementation of measures that reduce the potential spread of any disease from animal to animal at these events remains important.

Q. Will fairs with milking parlors be required to have protocols for the milk?

Milking parlors should not be used until this ban is lifted. All dairy cows residing at fairgrounds must be separated from the public.

Q. Can dairy heifers that have tested negative for H5N1, attend fairs, shows, exhibitions, or sales?

Not at this time. Currently, the most reliable test for H5N1 is using a milk sample. If a reliable test for non-lactating dairy cattle is developed or proposed, exemptions will be considered. This action is required to minimize the risk of exposure to outside sources of infection including animals and people. CDFA will re-evaluate these risks monthly. For shows occurring after March 1, 2025, contact cdfa.HPAInfo@cdfa.ca.gov for testing proposal evaluations.

Q. Can shows or sales of dairy heifers continue, if buyers agree to quarantine the animals prior to introducing the acquired animal into their herd?

No. Showing replacement heifers, springers, and adult lactating and dry dairy cows, is not permitted at this time, but risks will be evaluated monthly. This action is required to minimize the danger of exposing people and non-infected cows and birds to the disease. Exemption





proposals including all risk mitigation measures will be considered for fairs occurring after March 1, 2025. Please submit proposals for exceptions to cdfa.HPAInfo@cdfa.ca.gov.

OTHER LIVESTOCK QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. What considerations should be taken for other bird species or livestock that are not included in the ban?

We strongly encourage all exhibitions, shows, and fairs with any susceptible species to take extra precautions. If possible, avoid housing different species within the same space. Do not allow any apparently sick animals to be exhibited. Do not allow the public to touch or handle exhibited animals; if this is unavoidable, provide hand washing stations and/or hand sanitizer.

Q. Does this ban apply to dairy goats?

No. Dairy goats are not currently included in the ban.

Q. Are dairy goats susceptible to H5N1 Bird Flu?

There is no current evidence of dairy goat susceptibility, but this is part of ongoing research. If dairy goats are found susceptible, they will become an additional source of transmission to other animals and humans. We strongly encourage strict biosecurity measures in [multispecies farms](#) to prevent spill-over infections (an infection jumping from one species to another species).

GENERAL BAN RELATED QUESTIONS

Q. Why is California the only state that is putting out a ban? Why now?

The 2025 fair season started during a time when there is an unprecedented number of infected farms in California. Infected dairy cattle may be asymptomatic (not look sick) for two to three weeks yet still be able to spread the virus. As a result of high levels of infection and undetected transmission, the virus is spreading rapidly between dairies in California and infecting poultry flocks. In addition to the threat posed by infected dairies, poultry flocks are being infected by migratory birds. New cases of H5N1 are still being detected in California dairy and poultry flocks.

- As of January 24, 2025, there are 937 confirmed cases in dairy cattle across 16 states. CA makes up 720 of those cases. In the last 30 days, there were 40 new cases in dairy cattle nationwide; CA made up 35 of those. For the latest national updates on H5N1 in dairies, visit this [link](#).

Q. Can fairs submit proposals for exceptions? If yes, who can they submit them to?

Yes. Proposals will be considered for fairs occurring after March 1, 2025. Please submit proposals for exceptions to cdfa.HPAInfo@cdfa.ca.gov.





Q. How long is the ban expected to continue?

This ban will remain in effect as long as the virus concentrations remain high in California dairies due to the risk of infecting other cattle, poultry farms, and people in close contact with infected animals. While we are starting to see many more dairies test negative for Bird Flu after recovering from infection, it is hard to predict when there will be a significant recovery Statewide. CDFA will re-evaluate the risks monthly.

Q. Does the ban apply to educational farms or petting zoos with poultry and dairy cattle?

Yes. All poultry and dairy cattle should be removed from educational farm and petting zoos for public interactions and exhibitions. Traveling (mobile) farms and petting zoos cannot include specified banned animals. Permanent educational farms and petting zoos cannot publicly exhibit the specified banned animals.

Q. Are virtual poultry and dairy cattle showmanship (no animals physically gathered on site) permitted?

Yes. All virtually hosted shows and sales for poultry and dairy cattle are excluded from the ban. This form of exhibition provides the most effective protection against disease spread from events where animals from different farms and regions physically gather in one place.

Q. Are there any special precautions for fairs in areas that are currently free from disease?

Northern California (Butte, Colusa, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Stutter, Trinity, Tehama, Yolo, Yuba) is currently free from H5N1 Bird Flu in dairy cattle and an introduction would be devastating to local dairy farmers and poultry ranchers. It is critical that all animal owners and exhibitors limit movement of potentially infected dairy cattle and poultry, and potentially contaminated equipment like trailers into this region. Fairs can play a part in protecting farmers through education and policies that reinforce a “no movement of Bird Flu virus here” perspective. Educational materials can be found on our [website](#).

Q. Will animals from H5N1 infected areas be allowed to exhibit at shows and fairs?

Only animals specified by the ban are prohibited from exhibitions at shows and fairs, even if they are from an H5N1 infected area. Note that a farm under State Quarantine due to active infection would not be allowed to exhibit animals, but there may be herds or flocks with yet to be detected or redetected infections. These undetected farms would not be under State Quarantine movement restrictions, which is one reason for banning the highest risk animals from co-mingling with other highly susceptible animals at fairs and exhibitions. In addition to following the statewide ban on poultry and dairy cattle exhibition, it is recommended that ALL fairs, shows, and exhibitions practice enhanced biosecurity to reduce the risk of animal disease transmission including but not limited to H5N1 Bird Flu.





CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Karen Ross, Secretary

Q. Does the ban apply to animals originating from California and attending an exhibition, show, fair, or sale outside of the state?

The ban includes all poultry and dairy cattle attending a California exhibition, show, or fair. Animals attending out of state shows/exhibitions/fairs/sales would be subject to the rules of the [Federal Order https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/dairy-federal-order.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/dairy-federal-order.pdf) and any additional restrictions placed by the hosting state.

Q. What are CDFA's recommendations to protect my flocks/dairies from infection?

We urge all poultry flock and dairy herd owners to increase their biosecurity practices. Poultry owners can find recommendations at [CDFA](#) and [USDA](#) websites. Dairy herd owners can find biosecurity recommendations at [Protecting Your Herd Biosecurity Recommendations](#).

Q. Why is this ban important when considering the risk to humans?

While the current risk of H5N1 to the general public remains low, it is not zero. Risks of exposure and infection are significantly higher when humans interact with an infected animal. Poultry and dairy cattle are highly susceptible to this virus. The ban is in place to reduce the risk to all susceptible species, including humans, by temporarily banning the most highly susceptible species at shows, fairs, and exhibitions.

Q. How will CDFA provide adequate controls/requirements for exhibitors to shows and fairs once the ban is lifted to prevent the further spread of bird flu to non-infected premises/counties?

CDFA has been evaluating the risks of H5N1 Bird Flu to California agriculture since it was first detected in the United States in January 2022. The State Veterinarian works with epidemiologists to determine the risk factors and implements testing strategies, quarantines, and bans as needed to reduce the risk of disease spread. CDFA's education and outreach efforts began before this current outbreak and will continue indefinitely. These efforts include sharing animal health and disease mitigation practices including biosecurity recommendations through the CDFA website, social media, attending events fairs, shows, exhibitions, and presenting at agricultural clubs (FFA, 4H, school clubs).

Q. Will CDFA provide posters and educational materials for events to use such as public displays?

Yes. Educational materials can be found on our [website](#). These materials can be printed, displayed, and distributed. Reach out to our Public Information Officer at cdfa.HPAIinfo@cdfa.ca.gov for recommended materials.

