

To all event coordinators requesting a dairy cattle ban exemption proposal:

California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) understands the importance of having livestock and poultry exhibitions, especially to our FFA and 4H groups. The ban targets high risk animals and events to mitigate the ongoing spread of the H5N1 Bird Flu virus. High risk scenarios involve the movement of infected animals with exhibitions at shows and fairs being the highest risk. These events provide a single point location for multiple animal species originating from multiple locations across the nation to commingle and interact with the public. Additionally, when multiple species are gathered in the same area, this increases the chances for the H5N1 virus to mutate into other animal species.

As of May 2025, the ban on all California poultry and dairy cattle remains in place due to active infections of H5N1 Bird Flu across the state. Based on the current rate of viral spread, our State Veterinarian with CDFA's animal disease response team has modified the minimum biosecurity requirements to host a dairy cattle exhibition outlined as follows:

- For exhibitions held within known H5N1 affected areas in the state, entries will be limited to regions that have been exposed to H5N1. For exhibitions held in regions in the state not known to be positive for H5N1, entries will be limited to areas known to be free of disease.
- All cattle entries must bear official individual ID (have an 840 RFID ear tag in place). NPIN for the farm of origin will be required for each animal/group.
- Only dairy cattle from non-quarantined premises are allowed entry into the show. Exhibition and sale of these classes of animals will need to meet the testing requirements outlined in the [California's regional strategy](#) (page 7). *Exhibitors in free areas should be discouraged from purchasing animals from unknown status or positive status herds/regions.*
- Classes of dairy cattle allowed to show:
  - Heifers any age and stage of gestation
  - Calves any age
- Biosecurity Manager

The event must designate a biosecurity manager for the event. The biosecurity manager will be required to complete biosecurity training conducted either by CDFA or from an equivalent biosecurity training program within the last two years from the event date. The biosecurity manager will be responsible for ensuring that:

- All CDFA minimum biosecurity requirements are met
- All event space specific biosecurity requirements are met
- All cattle will have rectal temperatures taken on arrival. Animals with a temperature >103°F will be prohibited from entry. Animals being exhibited

must be free from clinical signs of H5N1 Bird Flu (no nasal discharge, lethargy, off feed, etc.).

- Foot baths with a disinfectant labeled for “Avian Influenza A Virus” will be placed at all entrances to the barn. Foot bath disinfectants will be changed as often as needed to maintain efficacy in accordance with manufacture guidance and not less than once every 12 hours.
- Hand washing/hand sanitizing stations will be placed at all entry and exit points of dairy barns/show rings.
- Exhibitors will provide their own individual feed and water buckets that will not be shared between participants (unless from the same household/farm).
- Dairy cattle will not be allowed to be on premises at the same time as other livestock or other poultry.
- Dairy exhibition events will be held either a minimum of 14 days prior to an animal exhibition event **or** directly after all animal species have been removed from the site.
- The public will not have any direct contact with exhibited dairy cattle.
- All bedding will be removed and disposed of in a location that has no contact with poultry, dairy animals, or wildlife and has no potential for runoff to animal facilities.
- Pens, livestock equipment, feed and water troughs will be cleaned and disinfected with a disinfectant labeled for “Avian Influenza A Virus”.

If a dairy cattle exhibition event does not include ALL the outlined minimum biosecurity requirements above, an exemption proposal must be submitted. A general template of an exemption proposal can be found on the following pages of this document.

Due to the volume of proposals CDFA is receiving, it may take four (4) to six (6) weeks for a determination. This will provide our veterinarians who are responding to the Bird Flu outbreak an opportunity to assess your proposals. Approved exemptions are for only a single event for which the proposal is submitted. Approvals may change due to the virus outbreak status (Ex. Biosecurity requirements may become more stringent or may be lifted completely).

It is recommended that all events provide a statement to participants in advance stating that all poultry and dairy cattle entries may be denied closer to the event if it is determined that the risks associated are too high.

We hope that you understand and support us in our efforts to safeguard California agriculture, to minimize the risks for disease spread to additional flocks, herds, and people.

**Submit proposals to:** [cdfa.HPAInfo@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:cdfa.HPAInfo@cdfa.ca.gov)

*Note: Words in grey are examples for your convenience.*

**Event Name:**

**Date of Event:**

**Address of the Event:**

To CDFA Dairy Cattle Exhibition Exemption Assessor,

We understand that the following minimum requirements are required to qualify for a one-time exemption to hold a dairy exhibition event. The specific biosecurity measures outlined below will be implemented to qualify for the one-time event exemption. These measures will assist in protecting participants, livestock, surrounding livestock communities, and the public from exposure to the H5N1 virus.

**Traceability:** All cattle entries must bear official individual ID (have an 840 RFID ear tag in place). NPIN for the farm of origin will be required for each animal/group.

**Classes of Dairy Cattle Allowed to Show:**

- Lactating and non-lactating dairy cattle
  - If lactating, an Individual negative Influenza A milk test will be required
- Heifers any age and stage of gestation
- Calves any age
- Entries are limited to dairy cattle from (state specific local regions)

**Describe Entry Testing Requirements if applicable:**

- Lactating Dairy Cattle
  - Lactating dairy cattle will be required to have a negative Influenza A PCR milk sample test. Must be a negative individual cow test from all four quarters.
  - Test must be conducted by an approved NAHLN laboratory and occur within 7 days before arriving at [Event Name].
- Springers/Close Up Dry Cows
  - Springers and close up dry cows must have a negative Influenza A serology (blood) and nasal swab test within 7 days before arriving at [Event Name].

**Biosecurity Requirements for Exhibitors/Visitors:**

[Name] has been designated as biosecurity manager for the event. [Name] will be responsible for ensuring that:

- All event space specific biosecurity requirements are met
- All biosecurity requirements listed in this proposal are met

- The biosecurity manager will be required to complete biosecurity training conducted either by CDFA or from an equivalent biosecurity training program within the last two years from the event.

The designated biosecurity manager will ensure the following are met:

- All cattle will have rectal temperatures taken on arrival. Animals with a temperature >103°F will be prohibited from entry. Animals being exhibited must be free from clinical signs of H5N1 Bird Flu (no nasal discharge, lethargy, off feed, etc.).
- Place foot baths with a disinfectant labeled for “Avian Influenza A Virus” at all entrances to the barn. Foot bath disinfectants will be changed as often as needed to maintain efficacy in accordance with manufacture guidance and not less than once every 12 hours.
- Hand washing/hand sanitizing stations will be placed at all entry and exit points of dairy barns/show rings.
- Exhibitors will provide their own individual feed and water buckets that will not be shared between participants (unless from the same household/farm).
- Dairy cattle will not be allowed to be on premises at the same time as poultry species.
- Dairy exhibition events will be held either a minimum of 14 days prior to a poultry exhibition event **or** after poultry species have been removed from the premises.
- The public will not have any direct contact with exhibited dairy cattle.

**Minimum Biosecurity Requirements for the Facility Following the Show:**

- All bedding will be removed and disposed of in a location that has no contact with poultry, dairy animals, or wildlife and has no potential for runoff to animal facilities.
- Pens, livestock equipment, feed and water troughs will be cleaned and disinfected with a disinfectant labeled for “Avian Influenza A Virus”.

Event managers and exhibitors assume their own risk for the potential for disease transmission while participating in the show.

Sincerely,

[Name or Requestor]

[Role of Requestor]

[Best contact method(s) for Requestor]