



April 28, 2020

F2020-09

TO: All Fairground CEOs and Board Chairs

SUBJECT: Standard Operating Procedures and Guidance

## Guidance for Sale of Junior Livestock Market Animals At Canceled California Fairs Due to COVID-19

The goal of this document is to prepare and establish proper guidelines for fairgrounds to receive junior livestock market animals and properly process these animals through the identified areas of inspections or checks to ensure the safety of these consumer-oriented products and transportation to packer/processors. It is not permissible to have any kind of livestock show and associated sale during COVID-19 restrictions.

Fairs are required to work with their local Public Health Authority to seek approval to collect animals at the fairground so they can be moved into the food system. Even though moving animals into the food chain is an essential function, in a particular area, the local Public Health Department may recommend alternate methods for moving animals to market that better protects individuals from exposure of COVID-19. It will be important for fair management to explain that this process will keep food flowing while also maximizing physical distancing recommendations.

**Personnel:** Fairs must restrict personnel on-site to only essential employees or volunteers necessary to handle and prepare the animals for shipment to the processing plant. These individuals should have their temperatures checked prior to arrival to the premises, and anyone with fever or signs of COVID-19 should be prohibited from entering the premises. All individuals at the location should follow the most recent public health agency guidelines for essential workers to reduce the risk of COVID-19. Key risk reduction considerations are included in this guidance document.

**Animal Processing:** Market ready animals will be shipped to verified processors. All market ready animals will have acceptable methods of official identification as required per species that will individually identify each animal to the exhibitor/owner prior to commingling of species. This may include ear tags, RFID devices, scrapie tags, slap tattoos, etc. The fairgrounds would serve as drop off points for these animals to be collected and inspected by a CA licensed veterinarian or qualified fair staff to ensure they meet standard criteria for residue, health and quality.



By participating in the Fair "Collection", exhibitors and their agents, parents and leaders acknowledge that they:

- 1) Understand and have read the State Rules and local fairs rules;
- 2) Agree to abide by them;
- 3) Certify all information provided on all forms is true and accurate; and
- 4) Agree to comply with the fair's decision regarding any alleged violation of the State or Local Rules. In the event that it is determined, there has been unethical treatment of animals or violation of state or federal regulations or of state or local fair drug policy rules, exhibitor names will be forwarded to the Fairs and Expositions Branch as well as given to the network of California fairs and to appropriate government agencies.

**Drug Residues:** All exhibitors are required to submit an electronic copy of the certificate of animal medication. This form (Declaration of Medication Form) could be submitted at least 2 days in advance of the animal collection for review. Forms must be filled out completely including all required signatures. Each form should be reviewed by a CA licensed veterinarian to determine if animal is clear to continue the process. Forms that are missing information and/or signatures or require additional clarification will be followed up by appropriate personnel to resolve problems. Animals that have residue concerns will not be allowed to be processed.

Upon arrival at the fairgrounds, at the time of drop off of the animal, the drug residue form will need to be re-signed/certified by exhibitor and parent to verify there have been no changes to residue status or to make notification of any changes regarding residue status that have occurred since original submission date and time. Any drug, substance or medication administered triggers review of the document by a veterinarian. A veterinarian should be on site to check forms with a changed residue status.

All State and local rules pertaining to drug residue policies shall apply.

**Animal Health:** Upon arrival, all animals brought to fairgrounds for shipping will be health checked prior to unloading by a CA licensed veterinarian or qualified fair staff. Animals that meet health requirements will be unloaded for Quality Check. Animals that do not pass the health inspection will not be unloaded and returned to exhibitor's residence.

**Quality Inspection of Animals:** There will be a qualified judge/evaluator or animal buyer/grader on-site to determine if animals are market ready. Animals will be weighed on certified scale prior to Quality inspection. Animals that do not meet the minimum weight requirements or are deemed not market ready will not be processed and exhibitors will be required to remove animal from fairgrounds. Animals meeting weight

and quality inspection standards will be penned/stalled and prepared for transportation to processor. Steers will need to have a Brand Inspection and official identification; lambs and goats are required to have official identification and scrapie tag and hogs will need to have official identification and a slap tattoo.

**Animal Drop Off:** Fairs will be responsible for scheduling drop off times that are staggered for delivering livestock at fairgrounds. Fairs should make an effort to receive animals that are co-mingled or housed together at one time. The staggered times would be implemented for physical distancing for COVID-19.

**Transportation:** Fairs will be responsible for arranging the transportation of all market animals to the appropriate species processor.

**Sales:** Fairs should have a signed agreement in place with each species packer/processor to define all terms of the agreement. The Fair must adhere to additional packer/processor terms outside of this process. These may include assessing the amount of gut fill that an animal exhibits, requiring animals to be held off feed the night before arriving at the fair, top pay weight and any other terms prescribed by the Packer/Processor

If animals are sold prior to the processing process outlined above, any animal that fails the drug residue, animal health and/or quality checks would prohibit that animal from being processed. This will include both resale and harvest and return animals. Fairs will require a signed form from exhibitor, prior to being sold, specifying that any animal that fails the residue, vet check and/or the quality check, will be prohibited from being shipped and processed, and the sale is null and void. In this scenario, the buyer would receive a refund and the seller would not receive any auction proceeds.

Fairs should allow all exhibitors the opportunity to opt out of the collection process if implemented by the fair. Exhibitors that choose not to participate would be required to submit a signed form provided by the fair declaring they want to opt out of participation in the fair collection process. Exhibitors that want to participate in this process will be required to sign a sales agreement provided by the Fair indicating their desire to participate in the sales program and understand the terms of the sale including, selling their animal RESALE to the processing facility; or selling their animal CUSTOM to a third party and animal is harvested at the processing facility. Exhibitors failing to submit a signed sales agreement form will not be allowed to proceed with the sales process.

In addition to selling the livestock directly to processors, Fairs may take advantage of the option to utilize an online auction/sales format to sell animals in advance or after the collection of animals at fairgrounds. Depending on how Fairs choose to set-up their

online auction/sale, they can allow animals to be sold as Resale and Custom. Resale animals are sold to processors at their designated resale market price for each species based on the agreement Fairs have with the processor. Custom buyers will have the animal harvested and returned to a cut and wrap facility where the buyer will pay to have the animal cut and wrapped and then pick up the product for their own consumption. Another option will be for online bidders to donate to the exhibitor or the fair and the successful bidder would not receive the cut and wrapped product and all animals would be sold directly to the processor. Fairs will have to make the determination on how they would utilize the online sales option.

**Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 - Best Practices Guidelines for Fairgrounds:** It is necessary to act in a manner that incorporates Governor Newsom's [Executive Orders](#) to prevent the spread of the coronavirus and protect California families and communities. To that end, the CDFA recommends the following:

### **Facility Access**

- Restrict access to essential personnel (staff, veterinarians, volunteers, sellers, market animal handlers/caretakers, and essential owners) and stagger entry to maintain physical distance recommendations.
- Develop procedures for minimizing the number of people that exit a vehicle while dropping off animals – ideally, no one exits their vehicle.
- Prohibit non-essential persons (students, friends, family members, etc.) from entering the facility.
- Update website and provide detailed map with instructions for sellers to deliver livestock on fairgrounds. Instructions for delivery should provide gate number for entry and exit and cones/barriers should be laid out to provide an orderly flow of truck/trailers to arrive at inspection and offloading site.
- Provide a delivery date and time to sellers for arrival at fairground. Delivery times should be staggered to limit the number of people gathering. Delivery of livestock should be organized by animal species and animals that are housed as a unit.
- Post signage at the entrance of fairground instructing all staff, volunteers, sellers, and buyers to wash hands, practice physical distancing and use face coverings.
- Do not allow access to the facility to anyone who shows symptoms of COVID-19, or who has been exposed to a person with symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, shortness of breath, or fever). View the CDC's COVID-19 symptoms at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- Limit the number of personnel or individuals on the fairgrounds at any one time to ensure physical distancing. Use an online sign-up form to limit the number of individuals on the fairgrounds at any one time.
- All individuals must stay 6 feet apart and must not congregate.

- All individuals should wear a face mask or cloth face covering that covers nose and mouth while on the premises.
- Require washing stations or hand sanitizer for all entering and leaving the premises.
- Limit fairground activity to animal collection actions necessary to perform market animal checks, including residue, health and quality checks, weighing, penning and load out of animals.

### **Animal Inspection Process**

- Trucks and trailers should arrive in a covered/shaded area for processing.
- Barriers/tables should be arranged to promote physical distancing for everyone participating and for all areas of processing and animal movement.
- An individual should meet vehicle and confirm animal and exhibitor that has arrived and re-verify residue information.
- When dropping off livestock, the driver and any passengers must remain inside the vehicle unless asked by Fair staff/volunteers to exit.
- A veterinarian or qualified individual will perform the animal health inspection. That individual will determine if health inspection can be done on or off the truck/trailer.
- If possible, segregate livestock when unloading on fairgrounds at collection area until health check is complete. Any animals showing signs of illness such as a fever, nasal discharge, cough, or diarrhea should be removed from fairgrounds immediately.
- A designated animal handler from each vehicle will unload animal(s) to designated area/pen
- All individuals must maintain physical distancing and should wear nitrile gloves, face mask covering or shield.
- Health inspection is performed. If inspection is done on or in vehicle/trailer and animal passes, animal is unloaded and proceeds to area for weighing. If animal fails health inspection animal is immediately removed from the fairgrounds by the designated handler/owner/parent/leader.
- Animal is weighed and weight and ear tag/identification is recorded by staff/volunteer. Quality Inspection is performed. If animal fails minimum weight standards for the species or fails the quality inspection, animal is removed from the fairgrounds by the designated handler/owner/parent/leader.
- If animal passes weighing requirements and quality check, animal is moved to appropriate pen/tie area to be readied for transport to processing plant.
- If animal fails health check or is not market ready it is not allowed to be sold and must be loaded back onto truck/trailer of seller.
- Sellers of livestock should immediately leave once animal(s) have passed veterinarian inspection and it has been deemed market ready.
- Fairs should have a plan as to where and how the re-loading of an animal that fails any inspections will take place.

### **Facility Biosecurity Measures**

- All individuals entering the collection location shall wash hands before entering and wear clean clothes and footwear as part of the fairground's general biosecurity plan.
- Individuals should touch only the equipment and supplies necessary for completing the tasks of collecting, unloading, performing checks (residue, health and quality), weighing and loading out market animals to be sent to the processor.
- Prohibit the shared use of equipment, office supplies, and other equipment between individuals. Any equipment that must be shared should be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use.
- Keep animal equipment and scales in a fixed position within the collection area to ensure equipment and scales can be accessed without touching these items or removing them. Disinfect before and after each use.
- When handling shared facilities such as trash receptacle lids, hoses, etc., use good biosecurity practices such as gloves, paper towels, hand-washing or other methods, as appropriate, to avoid transmission.

### **Cleaning and Disinfection Measures to Prevent COVID-19 Transmission**

- The virus can persist on non-porous materials (leather leads/halters, nylon halters/lead ropes, trailer latches, gate latches, door handles, spray nozzles) longer than porous materials (cotton lead ropes, livestock coats).
  - According to the CDC, the coronavirus can survive in the air up to 3 hours, on copper up to 4 hours, on cardboard up to 24 hours, and on stainless steel and plastic up to 72 hours.
- Clean communal equipment and supplies with appropriate cleaner.
- Disinfect trailer and gate latches, pen or show ring latches, light switches, scales, hose ends, spray nozzles, shovels, pitchforks, wheelbarrows and other frequently handled surfaces regularly or after contact with personnel.
- The CDC disinfection guidelines for COVID-19 are here:
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html> A list of approved disinfectants for tougher surfaces (not to be used on leather) is found here: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- Although there is no evidence that livestock can contract or become ill from COVID-19, practice good hygiene by washing your hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds or using a >60% alcohol hand sanitizer after touching livestock, communal areas, or communal equipment to prevent environmental spread of the virus. Hand sanitizer is not as effective as soap and water, so only use it when there is no soap and water available and hands are not visibly soiled.

### **Veterinary Care, Communication and Livestock Health**

- With the shortage of personal protective equipment across the country, veterinarians and veterinary clinics are reducing non-essential visits. Communicate proactively with the veterinarians to determine how to handle a veterinary emergency under current physical distancing guidelines. Work to establish a veterinarian- client- patient relationship prior to shipping of animals as the veterinarian must be able to attest to your livestock's health prior to submission to the fair for processing.

### **Human-to-Animal Transmission (citation: [AVMA](#))**

- While two (2) dogs (Hong Kong), one (1) cat (Belgium), and (2) cats in the US have been reported to have been infected with SARS-CoV-2, there is currently no evidence at this point to indicate that privately owned animals spread COVID-19 to other animals or people.
- Out of an abundance of caution, it is recommended that those ill with COVID-19 avoid contact with animals until more information is known about the virus. Owners/Animal Caretakers should designate an individual to care for the animal in the event of a COVID-19 illness. If an individual or family has been potentially exposed to COVID-19, do not assist in loading animals or travel to the fairgrounds, even if the individual remains in the vehicle. Coordinate with other families to pick up the animals and appropriate paperwork or reschedule if necessary.

### **Latest California Updates on COVID-19**

- Visit the California Department of Public Health website at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>
- California's COVID-19 webpage: <https://covid19.ca.gov/>

**Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 – General Information:** Please continue to take steps to protect yourself and others as recommended by the [CDC](#). Please consider putting up [posters](#) around the fairgrounds.

- **Clean your hands often**
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- **Avoid close contact**

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.
- **Stay home if you're sick**
  - Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care. Learn what to do if you are sick.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes**
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
  - Throw used tissues in the trash.
  - Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- **Wear a face mask**
  - If you are sick: You should wear a face mask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a face mask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then you should do your best to cover your coughs and sneezes, and people who are caring for you should wear a facemask if they enter your room. Learn what to do if you are sick.
  - If you are NOT sick: You do not need to wear a face mask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a face mask). Face masks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers. However, a cloth face covering should be worn when going out to public area.
- **Clean and disinfect**
  - Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
  - If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

Sincerely,



John Quiroz, Chief  
Fairs and Exposition Branch