



Biosecurity Tips

Recommendations for Fair Exhibitions

Exhibiting at the Fair

Agricultural animals are an important component of the United States agricultural industry. The quality and diversity of California animal agriculture are evident at livestock exhibitions and fairs throughout the State. Many hours of training and hard work are invested to prepare healthy, high-quality animals for competition. Exhibition of animals is a rewarding experience. Unfortunately, even healthy animals entered in fairs are at risk for exposure to disease.

Fair and exhibitions may pose a potential threat to individual animal health. The commingling of animals of different species, breeds, and ages, from multiple premises and herd management backgrounds, creates an environment for potential exposure and spread of animal diseases. The stresses of travel, close confinement, and a changing environment, may compromise an animal's resistance to disease. People attending the fair also contribute to potential disease spread. At the end of the fair, animals that return to their home premises may also pose a risk of disease spread to their home herd or flock mates.

Fair Biosecurity

Biosecurity refers to measures taken to prevent the introduction of new disease agents into a herd or flock. Commingling of animals, multiple human contacts, and contaminated equipment represent the greatest threats for disease exposure and spread at a fair. To minimize risks, fair exhibitors can implement a fair biosecurity plan.

The objective of a fair exhibitor's biosecurity plan is to minimize potential exposure to disease and to prevent or limit disease spread from the fair to the home premises. Even the best biosecurity plan may not eliminate all risk of disease exposure; each step taken will reduce the potential. Successful biosecurity plans include the following practices:

- To restrict animal contact with other animals, people, and livestock equipment,
- To clean and disinfect equipment, and
- To isolate and remove sick animals.

Biosecurity Before the Fair

Disease prevention and fair biosecurity start before exhibitors leave home. Only healthy animals should be entered in the fair. Before animals leave the home premises, the herd or flock veterinarian should examine each animal to ensure healthy animals enter the fairgrounds.

Tools and equipment may harbor disease agents. To minimize potential disease spread from the home premises to the fair, before packing for transport, clean and disinfect:

- **Feed equipment:** buckets, feeders, and hay racks.
- **Cleaning utensils:** shovels, pitch forks, and wheelbarrows.
- **Grooming equipment:** clippers and brushes.
- **Vehicle and trailer** (inside and outside).

Biosecurity at the Fair

To protect fair animals and minimize disease transmission risk while at the fair:

- Limit animal-animal contact,
- Limit animal-human-animal contact,
- Avoid sharing equipment with other exhibitors unless you thoroughly clean and disinfect between use,
- Cover feed and equipment to reduce risk of contamination, and
- Change clothing, hats, and shoes used at the fair before doing chores at home.

At the end of the fair, clean all animals returning home and disinfect all equipment before loading the trailer. Unused feed, hay, and bedding should be discarded at the fairgrounds, not taken home.

Biosecurity After the Fair

The possibility of animal exposure to disease agents can occur with even the best biosecurity practices at the fair. Since they may be harboring disease agents without clinical signs, animals returning from the fair should be isolated from other animals and pets. Monitor animals in isolation daily for signs of illness and contact the herd or flock veterinarian if any unusual symptoms are observed. To minimize the possible chance of disease spread to the main herd or flock, modify your chore routine to care for isolated fair animals last. Change your clothes after completing chores for isolated animals. Consult your veterinarian to develop an isolation plan suitable for your premises and herd or flock.

Use of fair biosecurity is a good management practice. These practices contribute to keeping your animals healthy and help to protect California livestock.

Help Protect Fairgoers

Animal show barns are one of the most popular areas of fairs. Fairs are great places to learn about different livestock species. Fair exhibitors have an opportunity and responsibility to educate fairgoers about animal safety and biosecurity practices. Animal diseases such as ringworm, E.coli, and *Salmonella* may cause significant problems in humans. It is important the people visiting fair show barns wash their hands after contact with animals. Handwashing or use of hand sanitizers, reduces possible disease transmission from animals to humans.

CDFA Animal Health Branch

Headquarters - (916) 900-5002
 Redding District - (530) 225-2140
 Modesto District - (209) 491-9350
 Tulare District - (559) 685-3500
 Ontario District - (909) 947-4462

USDA-APHIS-VS (916) 854-3950 or (877) 741-3690

For more information, please click the following:
[Animal Health Branch](http://www.cdffa.ca.gov)