

Kern County Fair and Event Center
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2020 POULTRY SHOWS CANCELLED

Kern County Fair Board cancels Poultry Exhibits and Shows

Bakersfield, California – The Kern County Fair Board of Directors voted Tuesday to extend the cancellation of the poultry show to the 2020 Kern County Fair. This decision comes after the January advisory for Fairs and Shows with Poultry from California State Veterinarian, Dr. Annette Jones.

Recognizing that Kern County has a significant poultry farm population and is a neighboring county to the regional quarantine area, Fair officials did not want to play a part in spreading such a highly contagious disease.

Kern County Fair and Event Center CEO Michael Olcott said that the board’s decision comes early enough so that youth still have plenty of time to get involved in a new project.

“Although another year without poultry is disappointing, we felt it was necessary to do our part to protect our community and poultry production in the San Joaquin Valley.” said Olcott “The poultry exhibit has always been among the favorites and our livestock department is preparing alternatives for those with poultry projects.”

All other Livestock Shows will proceed as normal at the 2020 Kern County Fair.

Virulent Newcastle disease, is a contagious and fatal viral disease affecting the respiratory, nervous and digestive systems of birds and poultry. The disease is so virulent that many birds and poultry die without showing any clinical signs.

Virulent Newcastle disease is not a food safety concern. No human cases of Newcastle disease have ever occurred from eating poultry products. Properly cooked poultry products are safe to eat.

As of February 14, 2020, USDA has confirmed 473 premises in California as infected with vND.

According to Dr. Annette Jones, "Virulent Newcastle disease cases have increased because people have violated the CDFA VND Regional Quarantine by moving infected birds or contaminated equipment and secondary spread to neighboring flocks."

To receive future Fair announcements follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

The 2020 Kern County Fair runs September 23 – October 4.

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January 31, 2020

State Veterinarian Update for Fairs and Shows with Poultry

This advisory is in response to numerous questions about the current risk of spreading virulent Newcastle disease via poultry at fairs and shows.

We have delayed posting this advisory in an effort to improve our understanding of the recent flareup of disease in the Southern California regional quarantine area, and the risk it may pose to fairs and shows throughout the State. While we have detected virus this winter in San Bernardino, Riverside and Los Angeles Counties, the cases appear to be related and reflect flock to flock spread, not extensive underlying disease. We will only know this for sure once more testing is completed throughout the region over the upcoming months, but we are cautiously optimistic.

Considering how highly contagious this virus is, even if we find a few more cases, our substantial progress can be credited to the cooperation of bird owners. When birds are not moved, it prevents virus amplification and gives the virus an opportunity to die naturally in the environment.

Virulent Newcastle Disease Advisory for Fairs and Shows with Poultry:

1. If located within the regional quarantine area of Southern California (western San Bernardino, western Riverside and Los Angeles counties), poultry movement without a permit continues to be prohibited due to the risk of VND.
2. If located outside of the regional quarantine area but in a neighboring county, we advise canceling poultry gatherings due to the risk of illegal movement of sick birds, or the movement of birds that are infected but have not started to show clinical signs, or the movement of contaminated equipment or other carriers.
3. If located in a county with significant poultry farm populations like those in the San Joaquin Valley of California, we advise cancelling poultry gatherings due to the risk of undetected virus spreading to large flocks and expanding from there to impact food production and trade.
4. If located in other areas of California, we advise cancelling in an abundance of caution until the regional quarantine in Southern California is lifted, but a case-by-case risk assessment may be warranted. Contact your local CDFA Animal Health District Office for more information.

Redding District - (530) 225-2140
Modesto District - (209) 491-9350
Tulare District - (559) 685-3500
Ontario District - (909) 947-5932

In all cases, and even after the regional quarantine for VND is lifted, practicing good biosecurity protects flocks from disease. For biosecurity tips, visit the CDFA Avian Health Page: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/Animal_Health/Avian_Health_Program.html

Sincerely,

Dr. Annette Jones
State Veterinarian
California Department of Food and Agriculture

