



STATE OF WASHINGTON

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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# BIOSECURITY MEASURES FOR POULTRY OWNERS AND FAIR EXHIBITORS

**From the State Veterinarian**

### **Fair Poultry Superintendents**

Please read this important information about biosecurity measures and share it with poultry exhibitors in advance of upcoming fairs and exhibitions. There are several highly contagious diseases of poultry that can spread rapidly where birds gather. Please closely check the health of birds at entry and during exhibition and encourage exhibitors to continue to monitor their birds for signs of illness after the fair, too. Thank you for doing your part to safeguard the health of poultry in Washington State!

### **Pre-Fair Biosecurity Checklist**

- Thoroughly clean and disinfect cages, feed and water bowls, and barns before using them.
- Establish handwashing stations at poultry barns.
- Obtain, distribute, and frequently use gel hand sanitizers.
- Obtain and display signage regarding barn sanitation policies (no eating or drinking in barns, wash hands before and after handling birds).
- Discuss the possible need for specific poultry vaccinations with a veterinarian.
- Communicate poultry health and biosecurity expectations to exhibitors and 4-H/FFA leaders.
- Arrange for a veterinarian to examine birds for exhibition before entry.
- Remind exhibitors:
  - Purchase birds from National Poultry Improvement Plan disease-free sources.
  - Quarantine new birds for at least 30 days before mixing with the rest of their flock.
  - Avoid contact between poultry and other birds, including waterfowl and wild birds.
  - Do not let people visit their flock.
  - Dedicate specific clothes and shoes for working with their home flock and other clothing and footwear to wear at shows.
  - Acquire feed from trusted sources and protect from rodents, wild birds, and moisture.
  - Give birds high-quality drinking water, not potentially-contaminated water from ponds or puddles.
  - Do not come to the fair if they are feeling ill, especially with flu-like symptoms.

## **Biosecurity Considerations during a Fair**

- Avian Health
  - Do not let exhibitors exhibit sick birds at a fair!
  - This includes any signs of respiratory disease (nasal/ocular discharge, swelling), weight loss, lethargy, ruffled feathers, lameness, or other signs of illness. Birds with lice, nits, or mites should also be denied entry.
- Veterinary Exams at check in
  - A veterinarian should be available to conduct an examination of every bird prior to entry.
  - If the fair veterinarian deems a bird unfit for show, it must be sent home.
  - If a veterinarian is not available at fair entry time, a knowledgeable person such as the poultry superintendent should examine birds closely looking for signs of illness; any questionable birds should be denied entry and sent home.
- Required Testing
  - Salmonella Pullorum Typhoid (PT) testing must be performed within 90 days prior to poultry exhibitions. Private veterinarians should be consulted to perform blood collection and submission to the Avian Health and Food Safety Laboratory (AHFSL) for testing. Adequate time must be allowed for diagnostics so results can be presented during fair check-in. Purchasing birds from a feed store within the last 12 months does not satisfy the PT testing requirement. For more information, contact the WSDA Avian Health Program at 509-607-4974 or [avhealth@agr.wa.gov](mailto:avhealth@agr.wa.gov).
- Housing
  - Keep waterfowl and chickens in different barns whenever possible to decrease risk of avian influenza. If they must be housed closely together due to space limitations, put waterfowl at the opposite end of the barn or install a solid barrier between cages.
  - Group birds by age and prevent mixing of young birds with adult birds.
  - Provide as much space between birds as possible.
  - If cages must be stacked, use protective barriers to prevent feces, water, feed, and bedding dropping from upper cages into lower cages.
- Cleaning and Disinfection
  - Clean and disinfect cages between classes of birds and at the end of the fair.
  - Do not put birds in soiled cages with soiled feed dishes and water bowls.
  - Have judges sanitize hands between different birds they handle.
- Public Health Concerns
  - Do not let exhibitors or the public eat or drink in barns.
  - Discourage pacifiers, sippy cups, and strollers in barns. Do not let exhibitors or the public handle birds without washing or sanitizing hands before and after. This means having handwashing stations and/or gel sanitizer available.
  - Discourage fairgoers from entering the poultry barn if they are ill, especially if they have flu-like symptoms.
- Avian Biosecurity
  - Do not let exhibitors handle another exhibitor's birds without permission and without washing hands or changing gloves before and after.
  - Do not let exhibitors share equipment.
  - Encourage each exhibitor to bring his/her/their own carpet square to use during classes.

- Keep pests such as wild birds and rodents out of poultry facilities; control flies if possible.
- Do not allow pets in poultry facilities.
- Do not allow birds to have contact with livestock, especially swine.

### **Biosecurity Checklist after a Fair**

- Thoroughly clean and disinfect cages, feed and water bowls, and any other equipment used during the fair. Store them so they will not be contaminated with bird or rodent feces.
- Maintain records so exhibitors can be contacted in case of disease concerns at or after the fair.
- Remind exhibitors:
  - Take fair clothing and footwear home in a plastic bag; launder and disinfect promptly.
  - Keep show birds separate from their home flock for 30 days after returning from a fair.
  - Watch returning birds closely for signs of illness; call a veterinarian to discuss any concerns that arise.
  - Do home flock chores first or designate one person to do the chores for returning birds and another for the home flock.
  - Use separate footwear, clothing, and equipment for the two groups; wash hands between groups.
  - Thoroughly clean and disinfect equipment often.
  - Do not visit other poultry farms.
  - Do not wear farm clothing or footwear off the farm.

### **Cleaning and Disinfection**

Thorough cleaning and disinfection are important aspects of biosecurity. A veterinarian can recommend the most appropriate disinfectant to use. Follow these steps for effective disinfection:

- Cleaning means removing all visible debris (manure, bedding, dirt, feathers, feed, etc.).
- Thoroughly clean all surfaces with soap and water.
- Rinse well and let dry.
- Apply an appropriate disinfectant at the proper concentration for the recommended contact time.
- Rinse and let dry before using equipment or restocking premises with birds.
- If you have questions regarding avian health, contact the WSDA Avian Health Program at 509-607-4974 or [avhealth@agr.wa.gov](mailto:avhealth@agr.wa.gov), the WSU AHFSL at 253-445-4537, or your local veterinarian.

### **Additional Resources**

- WSDA Avian Health Program  
<https://agr.wa.gov/departments/animals-livestock-and-pets/avian-health>
- USDA Avian Health resources  
<https://tinyurl.com/y8cegflb>
- Center for Food Safety and Public Health Poultry Diseases, Resources, and Biosecurity  
<http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Species/poultry.php>  
<http://poultrybiosecurity.org/>

- California Department of Food and Agriculture Poultry Biosecurity  
[https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal\\_Health/BioSpecies/BioPoultry.html](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/BioSpecies/BioPoultry.html)

**Revised Code of Washington  
(RCW) 16.36.082:  
Infected or exposed animals—  
Unlawful to transfer or expose  
other animals.**

It is unlawful for any person with an animal having any contagious, communicable, or infectious disease to knowingly stable the animal or allow the animal to be stabled in any barn with other animals without notifying the other owners.

**CRITICAL ADVICE FOR POULTRY EXHIBITORS**

- Only take healthy animals to shows or fairs.
- Quarantine new or returning birds from home flock for 30 days and monitor for signs of illness.
- Perform home flock chores first. Use separate equipment, footwear, and clothing for quarantined birds. Wash hands after handling each bird.
- Isolate sick birds and contact a veterinarian about them.
- Clean and disinfect equipment.
- Vaccinate for relevant diseases.
- Minimize stress for birds at home or away.
- Provide excellent nutrition and clean water at all times.
- Emphasize sanitation and keep premises clean.