



STATE OF WASHINGTON

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

P.O. Box 42560 • Olympia, Washington 98504-2560 • (360) 902-1878

# BIOSECURITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LIVESTOCK EXHIBITIONS

## From the State Veterinarian

### Fair Managers and Livestock Superintendents

Please read this important information about biosecurity measures and share it with livestock exhibitors in advance of upcoming fairs and exhibitions. There are several contagious diseases that can spread readily where animals gather. Please support your fair veterinarian(s) as they check the health of livestock at entry and during exhibition; encourage exhibitors to monitor their animals for signs of illness during and after the fair. Thank you for doing your part to safeguard the health of livestock in Washington State.

### Before a Fair

- Thoroughly clean and disinfect pens, panels, cages, feed and water buckets (if provided), and barns before using them.
- Establish handwashing stations at livestock barns.
- Obtain and distribute gel hand sanitizers throughout the fairgrounds.
- Obtain and display signage regarding barn sanitation policies (e.g., no eating or drinking in barns, wash hands before and after handling animals).
- Communicate livestock health and biosecurity expectations to exhibitors.
- Arrange for a veterinarian to examine every animal for exhibition before entry.
- Discuss any diseases of local concern with the fair veterinarian and determine if additional precautions are indicated.
- Establish separate exhibition areas (preferably separate barns) for each species to be exhibited.
- Remind exhibitors:
  - Quarantine new animals for 30 days before mixing with the rest of their flock/herd.
  - Dedicate specific clothes and shoes for working with their home flock/herd and other clothing and footwear to wear at shows.
  - Discuss the need for specific pre-fair vaccinations with a veterinarian. Follow any fair vaccination requirements and give recommended boosters 10 to 30 days before the event. Equine rhinopneumonitis (equine herpes virus-1) vaccination boosters within

35 days of exposure to the virus are associated with increased risk of equine herpes myeloencephalopathy, so boosters should be given well in advance of potential exposure.

- Acquire feed from trusted sources and protect from rodents, wild birds, and moisture.
- Give animals high-quality drinking water, not potentially-contaminated water from ponds or puddles.
- Inform exhibitors and visitors they should not go to a fair if they are feeling ill, especially with flu-like symptoms.
- Prohibit farm visitors before a fair, especially if they have traveled outside the country in the previous 30 days.
- Make sure all veterinary health inspections and certificates of veterinary inspection are current for all animals going to a fair.
- Disinfect all equipment, such as buckets, shovels, wheelbarrows, manure baskets, lead ropes, blankets, snares, clippers, scissors, brushes, show box, and so forth before entering the fairgrounds.
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect vehicles and trailers used to transport animals to and from a fair between uses.
- Do not mix species in the same trailer (especially sheep/goats and cattle), or animals of the same species from multiple farms, unless this cannot be avoided; in such a case, install solid panels between groups of animals originating from different premises to prevent nose-to-nose contact.

### **During a Fair**

- Do not admit sick animals to a fair! This includes those with signs of respiratory disease, weight loss, lethargy, lameness, external parasites, or other signs of illness.
- A veterinarian should be available to conduct an examination of every animal prior to entry. If the fair veterinarian deems an animal unfit for show, it must be denied entry and sent home.
- If a veterinarian is not available at fair entry time, a knowledgeable person such as a department superintendent should examine animals closely looking for signs of illness; any questionable animal should be denied entry and kept isolated until the fair veterinarian can conduct an examination.
- If species must be housed closely together due to space limitations, install a solid barrier between pens or cages.
- Group animals by age; prevent contact between young and adult animals.
- Provide as much space between animals as possible.
- For smaller animals, if cages must be stacked, use protective barriers to prevent feces, water, feed, and bedding dropping from upper cages into lower cages.
- Clean and disinfect cages between classes of smaller animals and at the end of the fair.
- Do not put smaller animals in soiled cages or use soiled feed dishes and water bowls.
- 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 livestock without washing or sanitizing hands before and after. This means having handwashing stations and/or gel sanitizer available.
- Have judges sanitize hands between different animals they handle.
- Keep pests such as wild birds and rodents out of facilities; control flies if possible.
- Do not allow pets in livestock facilities.
- Do not allow poultry and wild birds to have contact with livestock, especially swine.
- Monitor animal health throughout the fair and have the fair veterinarian examine animals showing signs of illness; dismiss them promptly if indicated.
- Discourage fairgoers from entering livestock barns if they are ill, especially with flu-like symptoms.
- Establish ventilation systems to keep animals comfortable and create low risk air flow patterns (e.g., species-specific area ventilation from young animals to adults; never from market sheep/goats to cattle).
- Remind Exhibitors:
  - Do not handle another exhibitor's animal without permission and without washing hands or changing gloves before and after.
  - Do not share equipment with other exhibitors unless it has been cleaned and disinfected before and after use.
  - Anyone exhibiting multiple animals should complete chores of youngest animals first.
  - Bring and use an individual carpet square from home for each smaller animal to be used during classes.
  - Avoid entering other exhibitors' pens/stalls and coming in contact with their animals. If you must come in contact with animals other than your own, wash your hands, clean and disinfect your boots, and change clothing before returning to your animals.
  - Contact the fair veterinarian or exhibition manager if you notice animals in need of attention.
  - If a communal water hose is used, do not insert it into buckets or under water when filling with water.
  - Prevent traffic between stalls and exhibition areas of different species (especially sheep/goats and cattle). If this is not possible, change clothing and disinfect hands and footwear before handling a different species.
  - Establish foot traffic patterns so neither exhibitors nor visitors walk on livestock feed or feeding areas.
  - Prevent manure removal traffic patterns from crossing livestock feeding areas.
  - As much as possible, minimize feed and water changes from home to fair.
  - Keep unused equipment and feed bagged or covered to reduce risk of contamination.
  - Properly dispose of unused bedding, hay, and feed after the fair. Do not bring it home.
  - Minimize stress by keeping animals cool, well bedded, and comfortable. This may require fans for large animals and frozen water bottles for smaller animals.

- Carefully consider whether exhibition animals should return home after the fair, and what risk that presents to other animals at home.
- If an animal becomes ill at the exhibit, isolate it until it can be examined by a veterinarian and be prepared to take it home for isolation and treatment.

### **After a Fair**

- Thoroughly clean and disinfect pens, panels, 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:
  - Clean and disinfect all items at the end of the fair before taking them home.
  - Take fair clothing and footwear home in a plastic bag; launder and disinfect promptly.
  - From a disease standpoint, the safest way to transport your animals is in your own trailer. Do not haul animals from or to other farms unless you thoroughly clean and disinfect the trailer between groups of animals from different sources.
  - Keep fair animals quarantined from other animals and pets for at least 30 days.
  - Check quarantined animals every day for any signs of illness and do their chores last. Take their temperatures twice daily for a week.
  - After caring for quarantined animals, wash hands, shower, change clothes, and clean and disinfect boots before going to other areas of the farm. Alternatively, designate one person to care for the main herd and another to care for animals in quarantine, using separate clothing, footwear, and equipment for both groups.
  - Contact a veterinarian if signs of illness are noticed in any animal. Many diseases can look like a foreign animal disease, and only a veterinarian can tell for sure.
  - Thoroughly clean and disinfect equipment often.
  - 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:

1. Remove all visible debris (manure, bedding, dirt, feed, etc.).
2. Thoroughly clean all surfaces with soap and water.
3. Rinse well and let dry.
4. Apply an appropriate disinfectant at the proper concentration for the recommended contact time.
5. Rinse and let dry before using equipment or restocking premises with animals.

These biosecurity practices are a good idea no matter what disease might be of concern. The goal is to keep every animal healthy and safeguard the Washington livestock industry. If you have questions about livestock health, please contact your local veterinarian or the State

Veterinarian at 360-902-1878 or [ahhealth@agr.wa.gov](mailto:ahhealth@agr.wa.gov).

### **Additional Resources**

Washington State Department of Agriculture Animal Health Program

<https://agr.wa.gov/departments/animals-livestock-and-pets/animal-health>

Washington State Fair Association

<http://wastatefairs.com/p/news/fair-health>

Center for Food Safety and Public Health (animals diseases and control)

[www.cfsph.iastate.edu](http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu)

Compendium of Measures to Prevent Disease Associated with Animals in Public Settings

<http://nasphv.org/documentsCompendiumAnimals.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 LIVESTOCK EXHIBITORS**

- Obtain livestock from low disease risk sources.
- Vaccinate for relevant diseases.
- Prevent contact of your livestock with other livestock.
- Designate clothing and footwear for barn use; clean and disinfect after wearing.
- Only take healthy animals to shows or fairs.
- Do not share feed, equipment, trailers, etc. with others.
- Minimize stress for animals at home or away.
- Provide excellent nutrition at all times.
- Clean and disinfect equipment and tools.
- Quarantine new or returning animals from home herd/flock for 30 days and monitor for signs of illness. Take temperatures twice daily for a week.
- Perform home herd/flock chores first. Use separate equipment, footwear, and clothing for quarantined animals. Wash hands after handling each animal.
- Isolate sick animals and contact a veterinarian about them.
- Emphasize sanitation and keep premises clean.
- Contact a veterinarian immediately if an animal becomes sick before, during, or after a show.