



WESTERN FAIRS ASSOCIATION
BUILDING BETTER FAIRS

Animal Welfare Handbook

2022

Edited and Submitted by the
Animal Agriculture and Livestock Advocacy Committee

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Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information to the Fair Industry in an effort to ensure animal health; food safety, quality assurance and public safety while animals, both domestic, and exotic are exhibited on our fairgrounds. Fairs and fairground facilities play a unique and important role in the welfare of animals as well as the general public. Fairgrounds are multi- purpose facilities operating on a year-round basis and need to concentrate on the health and safety of both the animals and general public that use them.

Fairgrounds should abide by the regulations established by the following agencies: the United States Department of Food and Agriculture, their State's Department of Food and Agriculture, American Veterinary Medical Association, State's Department of Fish and Game, North American Livestock Show and Rodeo Managers Association, American Horse Show Association, Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association, International Association of Fairs and Expositions, the Western Fairs Association, and each Fair's Board of Directors and/or Livestock/Animal Welfare Committee. These organizations are well established and have a primary focus of the health and safety of animals and understand the important role Fairs and fairground facilities play in the education and showcase of both domestic and exotic animals to the general public.

These organizations are great resources for Fairs and should be called upon to assist in regard to animal health and safety issues. Most animal rights organizations respect the opinions of these organizations regarding health and safety of animals.



Animal Health and Welfare

Fairs have the responsibility to protect the health and welfare of animals both domestic and exotic, while on the fairgrounds facility. It is recommended that Fairs work with their local certified veterinary technicians to conduct health inspections of animals upon arrival on their fairgrounds.

By conducting animal health inspections, Fairs can reduce the liability for the exhibitors and the Fair by excluding animals with contagious diseases; protect other livestock from exposure to contagious diseases; and protect the public from potential exposure to zoonotic diseases (diseases that can be transmitted from animal to humans). In doing so Fairs will promote responsible and proactive animal health and biosecurity management to exhibitors and the general public. Animal Health Inspections of livestock animals gives Fairs the opportunity to educate the exhibitors and ensure competitive fairness between exhibitors.

While the greatest potential risks of contagious disease exposure on the fairgrounds comes through the livestock department, Fairs should not overlook inspections of pony rides, petting zoos, equine, and other animal related events or exhibits taking place during the Fair or interim rental. During the inspection process, if animals, both livestock or otherwise, are found to need veterinary assistance due to injury or contagious disease, Fairs should have a designated area set aside to isolate any suspected animal until they can be treated and removed from the fairgrounds.

During Animal Health Inspections, certified veterinarian technicians will be inspecting animals for poor health conditions, signs of communicable disease, external parasites, any unsightly disease conditions, and any wounds open or closed that may be contagious.

In addition to Animal Health Inspections, Fairs need to provide and ensure that animals being housed on their facility receive adequate housing conditions (both size & cleanliness); appropriate washing facilities if so required; proper disposal of bedding and animal waste; and precautionary measures to protect both the animals and the public. All these items of importance should be included in a detailed, site-specific Consumer Protection Plan (see Public Safety section for more).

It is recommended that each Fair establish their own Animal Health and Welfare Policy as well as an Animal Care Plan to include standards and procedures for fair personnel to follow for both fair time and interim events that include domestic and/or exotic animals.

Plans and Policies may also contain forms for fair personnel to use for record keeping purposes.

The contents of an Animal Care Plan may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Animal Check-In and Release Protocol
- Animal Evacuation Protocol
- Animal Injury Protocol
- Animal Quarantine and Sickness Protocols
- Loose or Escaped Animal Protocol
- Deceased Animal Protocol
- Unruly Animal Protocol
- Zoonotic Disease Outbreak Protocol
- Human Injury (caused by animal) Protocol
- Required Reporting Forms
- Contact Protocol



Food Safety and Quality

As Fairs, we are ultimately responsible for the safety and quality of the market animals going through our junior livestock auctions and entering the food chain. Over the years, Livestock Judging Standards have been put in place for Fairs to follow. These standards have been fine tuned to mimic that of commercial animal production. It is recommended that each Fair use these judging standards to ensure that only quality market animals are going through their junior livestock auctions and becoming consumer products for human consumption.

In addition to Fairs enforcing judging standards, it is recommended that Fairs institute a residue avoidance program. The first step to increase awareness of responsibilities associated with the production of consumer-oriented products fairs should require the exhibitors of market animals to submit a signed Medication Declaration Form. This form (MDF) gives exhibitors the opportunity to declare any substance in or on their animal for which the required withdrawal period has not yet elapsed prior to arrival at Fair. This includes substances used per label or in extra label fashion. It is the responsibility of the Fair to

ensure that any animal that has been medicated and the withdrawal period has not elapsed, be held from processing until the withdrawal period has been completed. Fairs should work closely with their processors in coordinating the harvesting of animals that have not completed their withdrawal period on arrival at fair.

Secondly, Fairs may wish to implement random drug testing or at least drug testing of their champion animals. Fairs may test animals for foreign substances including, but not limited to drugs, chemicals, or feed additives. Even though urine is most commonly used to test animals for drugs, residue testing may be performed on any body tissue or fluid on the live animal or carcass. Test samples collected from any animal must have a zero tolerance for any identifiable or unidentifiable foreign substance including drugs (legal or illegal), chemicals of any kind or feed additives, unless established as permissible by the USDA or FDA or disclosed on the Medication Declaration Form submitted at weigh-in.

Public Safety

Over the past 10 to 20 years, fairgrounds have been faced with several livestock issues that could affect public safety. As Fairs, we are responsible for the safety of the visitors to our facilities on a year-round basis. Fairs and fairground facilities provide the opportunities for animal entertainment, education events, and activities. However, if not addressed properly, they can also provide the opportunity for disease transmission, rabies exposure, injuries, and other health problems to their visitors, especially young children, and the elderly. Zoonotic Diseases (i.e., zoonoses) are diseases that can be transmitted from animals to humans.

Over the last 10 years, outbreaks of E. coli have occurred on fairgrounds through the United States. The majority of these outbreaks have been linked back to livestock or animal exhibits. Other sources of outbreaks have included contaminated water sources and under cooked food. E. coli is not the only disease issue Fairs are faced with but has been a hot topic in the past decade. Recently, Fairs were also faced with the outbreak of Swine Flu. Even though Swine Flu had no link to Fairs, this outbreak affected the check-in and inspection process of swine arriving on our fairgrounds. As Fairs, we should be proactive in preventing disease outbreaks as well as other public safety issues on our fairgrounds, and not wait until an issue happens before we act.

Fairs, if they do not already have a copy, should obtain a current copy of the Compendium of Measures to Prevent Disease Associated with Animals in Public Settings National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, Inc. (NASPHV) published by the Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Disease Control and Prevention. This Compendium is a great resource of recommendations Fairs can implement to reduce public safety issues.

Some simple preventative actions Fairs can take to reduce public safety issues include:

- Evaluating your facility (determining public and animal traffic flow, methods of waste disposal, potential points of human animal contact)
- Provide informational signage
- Provide hand washing stations
- Create a consumer protection plan

A Consumer Protection Plan that outlines all standards and practices of your biosecurity program is extremely important. Every fairgrounds and event center facility need to develop a Consumer Protection Plan (CPP) and follow it as it's essential to the safety and health of the fair attendees and the fair animals. A written and executed plan on biosecurity will help your organization in the case of any potential outbreak that may lead to a lawsuit. A good CCP will include a Site Action Plan that serves as an E-coli Prevent Checklist as well as a disinfectant schedule and tracking log.

Fairgrounds are multi-use, multi-functional facilities, housing various events on a year-round basis. A building that one week may house an animal show or event (dog, cat, horse, poultry, rabbit, sheep, goat, etc.) the next week could house a wedding reception or trade show. Even though the animals may no longer be in the building there is still potential transmission of disease. Fairgrounds need to make sure that buildings (facilities) are properly cleaned and disinfected, and all animal bedding and waste is properly disposed of after an animal related event and before a new event uses the building (facility).

Education

Education is the key for Fairs to survive and overcome issue related to animal welfare on our fairgrounds, both as the educator and as the student. First and foremost, Fair

Management, Staff and their Board of Directors need to familiarize themselves with and have an understanding of the animal welfare issues that affect our industry.

There are various resources to assist Fairs in keeping up on the current animal welfare issues, some include:

- Fair Industry Workshops
- IAFE Consumer Protection Plan Training
- IAFE Personalized Alert System (PAS)
- Judging Conferences
- Livestock and/or Breed Association Publications
- State and Local Public Health Departments
- State Departments of Food and Agriculture
- State and local Veterinarians
- United States Department of Agriculture



Fairs need to work with and assist in the education of their partners (livestock exhibitors, exhibitor's families, leaders and advisors, animal acts and entertainment providers, interim event promoters, fairground visitors for both fair time and interim events and the media). All these partners play an important role to the success or failure of animal welfare as it relates to your Fair and fairgrounds. Each Fair needs to determine how they work with and assist in the education of their partners. Some successful methods include:

- Implementation of Livestock Quality Assurance Programs and Training
- Implementation of Code of Excellence Programs
- Implementation of Residue Avoidance Programs
- Livestock Show Camps
- Judging Contests
- Leader/Advisor Meetings
- Exhibitor and Vendor Guidelines and Handbooks
- Entertainment Handbooks
- School Tour Programs
- Media Policies and Guidelines
- Signage, Informational Handouts, and Flyers

Domestic Animals

Fairs have been known for their exhibition of livestock and equine since fairs began. Fairs and fairgrounds continue to exhibit and showcase livestock and equine animals. Over the years Fairs and fairgrounds have showcased all types of domestic animals through competitions, exhibitions and entertainment at fair time and interim events. These domestic animals include but are not limited to:

- Alpacas
- Beef Cattle
- Cavy
- Dairy Cattle
- Dogs
- House Cats
- Sheep
- Llamas
- Rabbits
- Equine (Horses, Ponies, Mules, etc.)
- Fowl (Chickens, Turkeys, Ducks, Geese, Pigeons, etc.)
- Swine (to include potbellied pigs)
- Goats (Dairy, Meat, Fiber, Pygmy)
- Rodents (Rats, Mice, etc.)



Exotic Animals

In addition to the variety of domestic animals that have been showcased at fairs over the years, many exotic animals have educated and entertained fairgoers. Some of these include but are not limited to:

- Wild Cats (Lions, Tigers, Bobcats, etc.)
- Bears
- Fox
- Skunks
- Raccoons



- Porcupines
- Reptiles (Snakes, Tortoises, Lizards, etc.)
- Alligators
- Sea Life (Seals, Sharks, etc.)
- Fish (Fresh and Saltwater)
- Insects
- Camels
- Elephants
- Monkeys
- Birds (Parrots, Toucans, Hummingbirds, etc.)



Hiring Quality Animal Attractions

When Fairs hire animal attractions, they are responsible for the quality of the attraction they have contracted with. It is in the Fair's best interest to make sure they are hiring a quality, reputable, and professional company. Fairs should realize and remember that the quality of the animal attractions they hire reflect directly on them.

Things Fairs should look for when hiring animal attractions:

- Cleanliness of exhibit or show (animal attraction companies should have and be able on request to provide a copy of their cleaning and operation procedures)
- Years of operation
- Is the exhibit or show interactive?
- Educational information provided to general public (signage, handouts, verbal)
- Current USDA, Fish & Game or other required licenses
- Does the staff wear uniforms?
- Reputation within the industry
- Willingness to work with and comply with local Fair Vet's recommendations following health inspections required by Fair Management and the State's Department of Agriculture

Interim Events

As fairgrounds continue to become multi-use facilities, we need to be aware of potential animal welfare issues not only at fair time. The number of Interim Events is increasing and continue to be more animal related. As fairgrounds, we need to take the same responsibilities regarding animal welfare that we do at fair time during our interim events. When fairgrounds are booking events, they need to work closely with event promoters to make sure animal related issues are being addressed.

Animal related events that are booked on fairgrounds include, but aren't limited to:

- Dog Shows
- Equestrian Events
- Cat Shows
- Jackpot Livestock Shows
- Animal Circuses
- Reptile Shows
- Rodent Shows
- Poultry Shows
- Rabbit Shows
- PBR Events
- High School/College/Amateur/Professional Rodeos



So, as fairgrounds continue to diversify what they are used for, we need to be aware of and take responsibility for the animals and general public that visit our facilities on a year-round basis, not only at fair time.

Animal Activist Organizations

It is important that fairs and their partners (exhibitors, vendors, and entertainers) play a role in educating the public about animal care practices as they relate to their exhibits and attractions. In part of that education, it is also crucial that we define the differences between animal welfare and animal rights.

- Animal Welfare (defined by the American Veterinary Medical Association) is a human responsibility that encompasses all aspects of animal well-being, including proper housing, management, disease prevention and treatment, responsible care, humane handling, and, when necessary, humane euthanasia. Animal welfare proponents: seek to improve the treatment and well-being of animals; believe that humans can interact with animals in entertainment, industry, sport, and recreation, but that interaction should include provisions for the proper care and management for all animals involved; support self-regulation of animal sports including rodeo, polo, FFA competitions, 4-H shows, horse racing, and more; utilize scientific evidence to base animal care and handling guidelines.
- Animal Rights is a *philosophical* view that animals have similar or the same rights as humans. Animal rights proponents: believe both domestic and exotic animals are being held captive by human beings; oppose the use of animals for sports, fiber, food, entertainment or education and fully support laws and regulations that would prohibit these interactions with animals; believe that violence, misinformation, and publicity stunts are valid uses of funding donated to their tax-exempt organizations for the purpose of helping animals; wish to halt all use of animals for food production, fiber, recreation, medical research, and entertainment and to liberate animals being used by humans.

By doing this, we as Fairs are being proactive in addressing the concerns on Animal Activist Organizations. Animals Activist Organizations include but are not limited to:

- Animal Liberation Front (ALF)
- Earth First
- Farm Sanctuary
- Humane Farming Association (HFA)
- Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS)
- People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)
- Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)
- Animal Recovery Mission (ARM)
- Direct Action Everywhere
- Mercy for Animals

- Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)
- Animal Legal Defense Fund
- Animals' Angels
- SHARK – Steve Hindi

Animal Rights Activists will show up at your fairgrounds at both fair and interim events, but they may also show up where exhibitors and staff don't expect them to. For example, while animals are in transit to and from our fairgrounds.

Each fair should have a plan prepared on how to interact and respond to animal activism.

These plans should include:

- Exhibitor, Vendor, and Entertainer trainings
- Communications (over media sources and in direct responses)
- Animal Security and Protection
- Free Speech Policy
 - It is recommended that Fairs research free speech rights in their area and what is required of them based on their organizational structure (i.e., government funded, non-profit, private, etc.).



Resource Directory

International Association of Fairs &
Expositions
P.O. Box 985
Springfield, MO 65801

American Veterinary Medical Association
1931 N. Meacham Road, Suite 100
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4360

Western Fairs Association
1776 Tribute Road, Suite 210
Sacramento, CA 95815-4495

California State Veterinarian
1220 N Street A-114
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Department of Food & Ag
1220 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

California Department of Fish & Game
1416 9th Street, Room 1217
Sacramento, CA 95814

CA Foundation for Ag in the Classroom
2600 River Plaza Drive
Sacramento, CA 95833

California Division of Fairs & Expositions
1010 Hurley Way, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95825

Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association
101 Pro Rodeo Dr.
Colorado Springs, CO 80919

American Farm Bureau Federation
225 Touhy Avenue
Park Ridge, IL 60068

School of Veterinary Medicine
University of California
One Shields Avenue
Davis, CA 95616

National Pork Producers Council
10664 Justin Dr
Urbandale, IA 50322

California Pork Producers Association
1225 H Street, Suite 106
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Cattlemen's Association
1221 H Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Beef Council
4640 Northgate Blvd., Suite 115
Sacramento, CA 95834

Oregon Cattlemen's Association
3415 Commercial St. SE Suite 217
Salem, OR 97302

Nevada Cattlemen's Association
P.O. Box 310
Elko, NV 89803

Washington Cattlemen's Association
P.O. Box 96
Ellensburg, WA 98926

American Dairy Goat Association
P.O. Box 865
Spindale, NC 28160

American Poultry Association
P.O. Box 306
Burgettstown, PA 15021

American Meat Goat Association
P.O. Box 676
Sonora, TX 76950

California Wool Growers Association
1225 H Street, Suite 101
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Milk Advisory Board
400 Oyster Point Blvd, Suite 211
South San Francisco, CA 94080

American Sheep Industry Association
9785 Maroon Circle, Suite 360
Centennial, CO 80112

California Farm Bureau Foundation
2600 River Plaza Drive
Sacramento, CA 95833

Animal Agriculture Alliance
2101 Wilson Blvd. Suite 810-B
Arlington, VA 22201

Protect the Harvest
480 Southpoint Circle
Brownsburg, IN 46112