



PROTECTING ANIMAL HEALTH AT MARYLAND FAIRS AND SHOWS

The Maryland Department of Agriculture, Animal Health Section (MDA) would like to address the current concern about swine influenza virus type H1N1 that is being report by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). **At this time MDA has found no reason for any change to our current regulations for dealing with swine influenza, however we would like to express the concern for increasing biosecurity at livestock events that may be coming up in your county.**

Our current regulations for fairs and show can be found on the MDA website at www.mda.state.md.us/animal_health. Whenever groups of animals (or people) are assembled in one place, the threat of exposure to contagious disease exists. The regulations under which all livestock shows, fairs and exhibitions in MD operate were written to minimize this threat to the animals shown, the public exposed and to the flocks and herds to which the exhibited animals return at the end of the season.

Disease causing agents can be spread by animals which appear to be perfectly healthy, by people and their clothing, boots, tools, etc...by trucks, trailers, vans and other means. It is essential that, therefore you practice **BIOSECURITY**: common sense, cleanliness and sanitation above and beyond the requirements. **BIOSECURITY** is the key word for protection of animal health. **BIOSECURITY** means doing everything possible to protect the health of livestock by preventing the transmission of disease. The tips presented here are some of the means by which you can help us achieve it.

TO PROTECT YOURSELF, EMPLOYEES AND ANIMALS AGAINST THE SWINE FLU, WE URGE YOU TO TAKE THE FOLLOWING PRECAUTIONS:

- Maintain strict biosecurity
- Prevent sick workers from entering swine facilities
- Prevent entry of anyone who has traveled internationally within the past month
- Require farm shoes and/or foot baths and hand and arm washing before and after contact with pigs. Change clothing if possible before and after entry
- Vaccinate pigs against Swine Influenza Virus
- Recommend that all workers are vaccinated against the seasonal influenza virus

Simple Biosecurity of All Livestock Before, During and After the Show

Before the Fair and Show/Weigh-In

Start Early by:

1. Select healthy animals for show and have them examined by your local veterinarian.
2. Obtain a Certificate of Veterinarian Inspection (CVI) for shows which is required by our regulation.
3. Perform daily inspections on your animals, and call your veterinarian for appointment(s) to perform examinations, tests and vaccinations as needed.

Don't wait to:

1. Send two copies of your completed and signed CVI's to the MDA Animal Health Section or regional lab in your area for approval. *You could be kept from showing if they are "in the mail" on show day.*
2. Have necessary treatments & surgery performed such as dehorning, castration and wart removals before exhibition and make sure the wounds have completely healed before showing.

During the Fair and Show

Do:

1. Have your health certificates and self certifications available for inspection when you arrive at the show grounds with your animals and throughout each show.
2. Consult your own veterinarian (or one provided by the show superintendent) and/or the MDA Staff if an animal is showing any signs of sickness or disease while at the event.
3. Keep your livestock as comfortable and free of stress as possible. Heat and humidity are two dangerous factors which can lower your animal's defense against disease.

Don't:

1. Share feed tubs, water buckets, clippers or other grooming equipment with other exhibitors because you could be sharing viruses, bacteria, fungi and other parasites without disinfecting them first.
2. Try to hide the fact that you are treating animal(s) for some ailment and don't treat them without some competent advice. You could, by doing so, mask important symptoms and still not cure the disease.

After the Fair and Show

Do:

1. Remember that, even though your animals are appearing healthy, they can still carry a contagious disease home, *so...*
2. Isolate your show animals as completely as practical from those left at home for at least two weeks.
3. Ask your veterinarian if "boosters" are needed between shows and fairs.

4. Be alert for signs of disease such as coughs, nasal discharge, diarrhea, lack of appetite, skin problems, lameness, etc.

Don't:

1. Unnecessarily expose animals at home (particularly those of the same species) to your show animal(s).
2. Be afraid to report any problems which might develop to your veterinarian and to veterinarians at the MDA Animal Health Section.
3. Hesitate to pass your comments and suggestions on to us at the MDA. We need your input to be certain that we are doing the best job possible.
4. Forget to get ready for next year.