

SAFETY AT THE FAIR



State and county fairs are gearing up for their annual events. There will be carnival rides, art exhibits, fried everything, and livestock shows. Exhibitors, parents and sponsors are now spending extra time in the barn to ensure that animals are in top condition for show. In all the excitement, it is critical to also follow safety and health precautions.

The SW Ag Center addressed safe livestock handling practices in their videos, [*Livestock Safety for Kids \(LSFK\)*](#) and [*Right from the Start \(RFTS\)*](#). LSFK is perfect for young livestock show visitors and RFTS is a useful tool for exhibitors of all ages.

On August 3, 2012, The CDC released an [official health advisory](#) related to an increase in Influenza A H3N2v Virus infections in the U.S. From July 12 through August 3, sixteen cases were confirmed; fifteen of those reported contact with livestock while attending or exhibiting at an agricultural fair.

Did you KNOW...?

Know that animals can carry germs that can make people sick. The spread of disease from animal to human is referred to as zoonosis. People who experience influenza-like symptoms following close contact with livestock should inform their health care provider about the exposure. Influenza viruses have not been shown to be transmissible to people through eating properly handled and prepared pork or other products derived from pigs. For more information about the proper handling and preparation of pork, read the USDA fact sheet "[Fresh Pork from Farm to Table.](#)"

Never eat, drink, or put things in your mouth in animal areas.

Older adults, people with chronic medical conditions (e.g. asthma, diabetes, heart disease or neurological conditions), pregnant women, and young children should be extra careful around animals. Patients with influenza-like illness who are at high risk for complications should see their health care provider promptly to determine if treatment with antiviral medications is needed.

Wash your hands with soap and water right after visiting or handling animals, after removing soiled clothes or shoes, before preparing or eating food, and after going to the toilet. Dry hands with a disposable paper towel.

Make sure these **Livestock Handling Essentials** are included in your show equipment.

- Liquid soap
- Paper towels
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer (≥60% concentration)

Resources for venue operators, staff, and visitors are included in the latest [*Compendium of Measures to Prevent Disease Associated with Animals in Public Settings*](#) written by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, Inc and published by the CDC. Educational public health posters are also included in the appendices. Stay safe and healthy and have fun at the fair!

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