

Recommendations for organizers of dairy shows and events to Reduce the risk of H5N1 virus transmission

Before the Event

Work with State Animal Health Officials and State Public Health Officials

- Stay up to date on Federal and State requirements for animal movement
 - <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/dairy-federal-order.pdf>
 - Provide the most current Federal and State requirements for animal movement to potential exhibitors prior to the event
- Develop a plan with these officials for the disposal or removal of raw milk in a way that no other humans or animals have access to it
- Establish a plan in case an animal develops clinical signs consistent with H5N1 virus infection.
- Collect contact information for state animal health officials and local or state public health officials to ensure that they can be reached if they are needed during the event

Collect contact information from all exhibitors to be able to rapidly communicate information prior to, during, and after the event.

Develop and share the event biosecurity plan with exhibitors

- This plan should include:
 - Limiting the co-mingling of cattle from different herds when possible
 - Limit nose to nose contact
 - Stagger stalling to allow space between exhibitors
 - Prohibit shared water troughs between farms
 - If facility has a milking parlor, schedule milking times and clean stall and equipment between farms

Develop a plan for the disposal or removal of raw milk should lactating cows be present

- Provide a designated disposal area for milk and prohibit the disposal of any area other products at this location

Should an animal show signs of H5N1 virus infection

- Establish an isolation area away from other animals and the public
- Develop protocols and PPE recommendations for those caring for sick animals
 - <https://h5n1.extension.org/youth-livestock-events-and-shows/>

Ensure handwashing stations are present and fully stocked with supplies (soap, water, towels) near the exit of the animal exhibition area.

Develop signage to remind the public and exhibitors of proper and recommended biosecurity

- <https://h5n1.extension.org/youth-livestock-events-and-shows/>

During the Event

Communicate with all exhibitors at the start of the event

- The Biosecurity plan
- The signs of H5N1 illness
- Specific actions to take should an animal become sick

Clean and disinfect equipment frequently and remind exhibitors to do the same

Post signs near the entry and exit of the exhibition area to remind visitors

- Food and beverages in the barn are prohibited
- Contact with animals is prohibited
- Wash their hands after leaving the animal area

Consider closing areas of the barn during high animal traffic times (during shows and milking times) and allowing spectators to view these events from designated areas

After the Event

Develop a communication plan should an animal that was on exhibition show signs of illness within a week after the event.

Thoroughly clean and disinfect the exhibition area.



References

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/guidance-dairy-cattle-livestock-exhibition.pdf>

Authors

Hartschuh, J., Horn, T., Manriquez, D., & O'Donnell, N. (2025). Recommendations for Organizers of Dairy Shows and Events to Reduce the Risk of H5N1 Transmission [Factsheet]. Extension Foundation, EXCITE

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