

These guidelines were developed by the Ohio Department of Agriculture in conjunction with the Ohio Department of Health. They were presented at the Ohio Fair Manager's Annual meeting on January 5, 2001 to provide a framework for addressing some of the potential human health risks associated with exhibition animals and the general public. This document is considered by both Agencies as "a work in progress" and subject to revision.

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Voluntary Guidelines for Animal Exhibitions in Ohio

During the past two years, several *E. coli* O157:H7 outbreaks have occurred in the nation and have been associated with agricultural fairs, petting zoos and animal exhibitions. In addition to concerns regarding exposure to *E. coli* O157:H7, other pathogens including, *Salmonella*, Q fever, *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia*, also pose a contamination potential. As always, the risk of rabies from animal bites can become a real issue. The Ohio Departments of Agriculture and Health provide this voluntary guidance for reducing the risk of exposure for visitors at agricultural fairs and similar events in Ohio. By applying some planning and forethought in these areas, we all can help ensure an enjoyable and safe fair visit for all Ohioans. Three *E. coli* outbreaks occurred in Ohio associated with animal exhibitions: one in 2000 and two in 2001.

Water distribution systems:

1. Install back flow prevention devices between fountains or outlets in livestock areas and water lines supplying other uses on the grounds.
2. Evaluate the fairgrounds plumbing plan. Water supplies for food vendors should be separated from barn lines and sanitary facilities.
3. Pressure-test and inspect the fairgrounds potable water piping distribution system. Eliminate dead end lines.
4. Inspect and test the potable water supply for, at least, total coliforms, *E. coli* and nitrates before the event begins. Collect the samples from various outlets in the fairgrounds distribution system.
5. If the water distribution system uses in-ground vaults, ensure the vaults are not flooded. Install sump pumps or drains to remove water from the vaults.
6. Discourage the use of hoses. Where used, install hose bibs and post signs that indicate the hose must not be left lying on the ground. Ensure proper drainage to eliminate and prevent puddles or pooling water.
7. Ensure good drainage around yard and barn hydrants.
8. If the water supply is from wells, evaluate the wells for proper construction including the proper grouting of the annular space.
9. If the water supply is from wells, adequate distances must be maintained from possible sources of contamination such as manure storage areas, animal holding areas, etc. The wells must be protected from physical damage through the use of barriers.

Camper areas:

1. Ensure that waste dump stations are clearly marked and properly functioning.
2. Eliminate puddles or pooling of water around dump stations and potable water outlets.
3. Install back-flow prevention on hydrants and faucets in the camper area.

Animal exhibits (petting zoos/vendors):

1. Require that hand-wash stations be placed at the exits from petting zoo areas and post signs to encourage their immediate use. This is especially important with any vendor/exhibitor that has reptiles. Reptiles carry many strains of salmonella bacteria that can cause very serious illness in young children.
2. Keep animal areas, pens, partitions, etc. clean and free of manure residue. Promptly remove any animals being displayed that show evidence of illness, especially diarrhea and fever.
3. Hand-mouth activities such as eating and drinking, smoking, and carrying toys and pacifiers should not be permitted in petting zoo interaction areas.
4. Wild animals that are known reservoirs for rabies (bats, skunks, raccoons, and foxes) should not have any direct contact with the public. Exhibits utilizing wild and exotic carnivores, and primates should take steps to reduce the risk of these animals biting the public, as bites from these animals may also pose a rabies risk. Require petting zoos to have all eligible animals currently vaccinated against rabies. A veterinarian will be able to identify which animals can be vaccinated against rabies.
5. Discourage the use of young animals less than 60 days of age in exhibits where there is contact with the public. Young animals are more likely to be potential sources of diarrheal diseases that can be transmitted to children. It is preferable to use miniature or pygmy adult animals where animals are directly exposed to the public. If petting (direct contact) exposure is permitted, close supervision must be provided.
6. Do not permit vendors to sell or award, as prizes, reptiles, poultry or mammals. It is illegal, under Federal law to sell or give away turtles, with a shell length of less than four inches. A Commercial Propagators Permit from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife does not exempt vendors from this federal restriction. Consult your local health department and county wildlife officer should you encounter **questions or** problems in this area.
7. Require that at least one adult is in attendance at all times in an animal exhibit.
8. Have your fair veterinarian make routine inspections of animal exhibit areas (including high volume times on evenings and weekends) to ensure that the above guidelines are being met.

General livestock:

1. Provide hand-wash stations at exits and other strategic places around livestock barns. Post signs to encourage their use.
2. Develop and implement the manure collection, handling and storage procedures. Determine where runoff from the manure storage area drains. Avoid runoff and

pooling water.

3. Develop a written policy on how animal bites will be handled. Talk to your local health department and share this policy with medical, veterinary and fair security authorities.
4. If you are considering an animal birthing display, keep visitors well back from the birthing area. Do not let visitors contact baby, including newborn, animals.

General food and hygiene practices:

- 1. Encourage the use of areas other than facilities that contain or have contained livestock for events involving only people.**
2. Locate food and beverage service away from livestock areas whenever possible. Consider food and beverage courts.
3. Work with the local health department to ensure all food/beverage vendors are licensed and inspected.
4. Provide adequate public hand-wash facilities near food/beverage vending areas. Post signs to encourage use.
5. Portable toilets should be equipped with hand-wash facilities. Signs to encourage attendees to wash hands before leaving animal/livestock areas and before eating should appear over/near hand-wash facilities.
6. Post signs to encourage attendees to wash hands before leaving animal/livestock areas and post signs to encourage attendees to wash hands before eating.
7. Keep records, i.e., vendors, vendor locations, schedule of events, etc.

Resources:

- Local health departments
- Local water utility
- Local building-plumbing code enforcement unit
- Soil and Water Conservation District Offices (locations on Ohio Department of Natural Resources website: <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/odnr/soilandwater/Links.htm>)
- Ohio Department of Health
website: <http://www.odh.state.oh.us>
- Ohio Department of Agriculture
website: <http://www.state.oh.us/agr>
- Ohio Department of Commerce, Division of Industrial Compliance (State Plumbing Code)
website: <http://www.com.state.oh.us/ODOC/dic/dicplumbing.htm>
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Soil and Water Conservation
website: <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/odnr/soilandwater>
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife
website: <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/wildlife/default.htm>

- Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA, Division of Drinking and Ground Water. You may contact the appropriate OEPA District Office as listed on the agency website: <http://www.epa.state.oh.us>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: <http://www.cdc.gov/>