



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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*Department of Regulatory Services
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Special Memorandum for Exhibitors and Event Organizers: Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI H5N1) and Minimizing Disease Transmission Risks

Since the detection of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI H5N1) in dairy cattle earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced a federal order requiring pre-movement testing for interstate movement of lactating dairy cattle. The 2024 Connecticut Fair and Show Requirements issued on April 29, 2024, reflect the federal order and those can be found [here](#).

In addition to adhering to the Connecticut Fair and Show Requirements for 2024, the Connecticut Department of Agriculture offers the following recommendations to both exhibitors and event organizers. These recommendations pertain to milking practices and disposal of milk collected on-site, in the best interest of elevated biosecurity surrounding H5N1.

Milk Handling Recommendations for Exhibitors and Event Organizers:

1. Exhibitors should utilize their own milking equipment while at the event and avoid sharing or use of communal equipment.
 - Milking equipment should be cleaned and disinfected between exhibitors.
2. If the use of a communal milking area, shared milking equipment, or communal parlor surfaces is unavoidable, ensure surfaces and equipment are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between herds.
 - Appointed fair personnel may monitor these operations to ensure compliance, especially if the public cannot be separated from the milking area.
 - Efforts should be made to reduce the risk of human contact with raw milk.
3. Do not house multiple species in one barn.
4. Handwashing stations should be provided and maintained in all areas housing live animals.
 - Event organizers should consider implements to limit contact between animals and people, such as creating walkways with barriers.
5. Consider updating the event's animal quarantine protocol and consider retaining a veterinarian to perform on-call duties during the event, in the case that animals become ill and require on-site quarantine and medical attention.
 - Animals experiencing clinical signs consistent with H5N1 should not attend events.
 - Common clinical signs include decreased feed consumption, decreased rumination, respiratory signs such as nasal discharge, and decreased milk production. Less common clinical signs are abnormal fecal material, lethargy, dehydration, fever, thickened milk, or no milk at all.
6. Develop a milk disposal plan for the event and ensure its adherence.
 - Ideally, milk should be pasteurized before disposal.
 - Milk should not be fed to other livestock.
 - Depending on the infrastructure of the event, the milk disposal plan could include use of a closed septic system, for example.
7. Exhibitors should consider quarantining when returning to their own farm from an event.

- Keep the cattle that were away from the farm isolated from the remainder of the herd for a minimum of two (2) weeks.
8. If your exhibit premises will host multiple livestock events over the season, organizers should clean and disinfect barns, stalls, and equipment between events.
 9. Exhibitors should carry hard copies of their most recent HPAI laboratory results, as well as their oCVI (official Certificate of Veterinary Inspection), to each event.

If you would like additional assistance in preparing an exhibit or event during the 2024 fair and show season, please contact the Bureau of Regulatory Services at 860-713-2504. For more information on H5N1, please visit our [website](#).

Sincerely,

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