

Preventing Zoonotic Diseases at Fairs and Animal Exhibits: Work Plan for Local Health Departments

Zoonotic diseases are infectious diseases shared between animals and people, and outbreaks of zoonotic diseases have occurred among fair attendees. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) recommends that local health departments (LHD) initiate communication with fair organizers and other key partners at least 2-3 months in advance of a fair's opening to allow adequate time for assessment and planning for zoonotic disease prevention.

I. Compile information on fairs in your area and identify key collaborators.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture maintains a [list of California county fairs](http://www.cafairs.com/fair_list.asp) (http://www.cafairs.com/fair_list.asp). This list provides the current address, dates, and website information for California fairs. (Note: This list may not include small, local events or operations that feature animals other than livestock.)

- a. Use the [LHD Fair Worksheet](#) to document information about the fair (e.g., dates of operation, location, scheduled animal events/venues) and collect contact information for key collaborators, including Fair Management and other fairs/exhibition partners in local and state organizations.
- b. If the fair schedule indicates there will be animals present, make note of all animal exhibits and events scheduled to occur. Proceed with the rest of the work plan below to assess and address their potential for transmission of zoonotic pathogens.
 - i. Even if no animals are present at the fair, you may nonetheless wish to establish communication with fair organizers to discuss preparation for other public health concerns potentially emergent at fairs, such as foodborne illnesses, heat-related events, or injuries.
- c. Note in particular animal exhibits/venues that may include livestock--such as cows, goats, sheep, pigs, and chickens--as *E. coli*, *Salmonella*, and other zoonotic pathogens can be transmitted to humans via contact with these animals and their environments. Document information about these specific animal exhibits on the [LHD Fair Worksheet](#).

II. Contact Fair Management and discuss the potential for animal exhibits/events at the fair to transmit zoonotic pathogens to guests and staff.

- a. Establish communication with Fair Management and confirm animals that will be present and events scheduled to take place.
- b. Share CDPH resources with Fair Management to introduce and help implement key prevention practices at animal exhibits – an [email template](#) is available to customize and send:



- [Best Practices for Fair Management and Animal Exhibitors](#)
- [Checklist of Key Tasks and Contacts for Fair Management](#)

III. Schedule and perform a joint walk-through of the fairgrounds and animal venues with Fair Management.

- Following preliminary discussion of animal events with Fair Management, arrange a time prior to the fair's opening day in which to walk through animal exhibit areas at the fairgrounds with Fair Management or other operational staff.
- During the walk-through, assess where animals will be housed or exhibited and note opportunities for public access.
- Utilize the [LHD Fair Worksheet](#) and [Fair Management Checklist](#) to review animal exhibit areas together and document findings.
 - Because some exhibitors and vendors may not be set up at the time of your initial walk-through, consider scheduling a follow-up walk-through nearer or shortly after the fair's opening.

For a complete listing and explanation of discussion topics with Fair Management, see [Best Practices for Fair Management and Animal Exhibitors](#) and [NASPHV Animal Contact Compendium and Resources](#).

IV. Follow up with Fair Management to ensure readiness for the fair's opening day.

Following the joint walk-through, maintain communication with Fair Management to encourage ongoing collaboration.

- Offer additional meetings to address questions or concerns that may have been observed during the walk-through assessment.
- Plan joint media communications to promote the upcoming fair and encourage health and safety practices.
 - Consider announcing the upcoming fair in your jurisdiction with a news release describing general health and safety information including zoonotic disease prevention recommendations as appropriate. A [news release template](#) with zoonotic disease prevention information is available to customize and distribute at the start of fair season.



V. Formulate a response plan for possible fair-associated disease incident/outbreak.

In preparation for a potential zoonotic disease incident or outbreak, compile contact information for key partners and staff at local and state organizations who would be involved with a response and document on the [LHD Fair Worksheet](#).

- a. Reaffirm communication with key collaborators, including those who can perform essential investigation tasks, such as visual inspection, environmental sampling, or testing of animal/environmental samples.
- b. Assemble relevant (e.g., STEC) case report forms, case-patient questionnaires, and public education fact sheets.
- c. Identify triggers for implementation of response (e.g., X number of cases within Y period of time).
- d. Identify key messages and channels for communications in the event of a local outbreak.
 - i. Prepare template public/media messaging:
 1. Audiences to consider include fair exhibitors, healthcare providers, the public, and media outlets.
 2. A [news release template](#) is available to customize and distribute in the event of an identified outbreak.

