



Steve Troxler
Commissioner

North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Christina L. Waggett
Assistant Commissioner for
Consumer Protection

Michael P. Martin, DVM
State Veterinarian

Recommendations to Minimize Influenza Transmission at Dairy Cattle Livestock Exhibitions

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Background

In late March 2024, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) was identified in lactating dairy cows. The virus has been shown to spread between lactating cows within the same herd, between dairies associated with cattle movements, and from cows to poultry. Affected cows may have signs of decreased feed intake, decreased milk production, and changes to milk consistency (colostrum-like: thickened and discolored). Some infected herds might not have any clinical signs. Appropriate measures may be taken to minimize the potential for spread of influenza.

USDA Requirements for Movement of Dairy Cattle

On April 29, 2024 USDA mandated federal requirements for **interstate** movement of dairy cattle.

- Lactating dairy cattle are required to receive a negative test for Influenza A virus at an approved National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) laboratory using a NAHLN-approved assay.
 - Negative test result must be within 7 days of movement.
 - Animals may travel to their home herd using the same negative test result provided the exhibition, show, or sale does not exceed 10 days of length.
- Movement must be accompanied by a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI).

Recommendations for Exhibition Organizers

Before the Event

- Collect sufficient contact information (e.g. email address and cell phone number) from exhibitors to facilitate communication as needed.
- Ensure cattle will have proper individual identification.
- Develop a biosecurity plan for the event.
 - Minimize nose to nose contact between animals from different herds (e.g. space separation, physical barriers).
 - Assess exhibition milk disposal. If possible, all milk should be heat treated/pasteurized prior to disposal. The NCDA&CS Veterinary Division can help with developing plans for milk disposal.
 - Establish an isolation area in the event a cow becomes sick.
 - Establish cleaning and disinfection procedures for animal areas, especially the parlor.
- Have hand washing/sanitization stations with signage available near exhibition areas.
- Consider having personal protective equipment [PPE] (e.g. disposable gloves, boot covers, eye protection) available for higher risk areas such as the milking parlor.

During the Event

- Communicate proposed disease control measures and PPE recommendations with exhibitors.
- Clean and disinfect equipment frequently.

After the Event

- Clean and disinfect exhibition areas.

Recommendations for Exhibitors

Before the Event

- Make sure that any animals attending the fair or exhibition are not sick.
- Clean and disinfect any equipment you will bring to the event including vehicle and trailer.
- Avoid transporting animals from different farms in the same trailer.

During the Event

- Keep copies of any pertinent documents with you at the event (e.g. certificate of veterinary inspection [CVI], test results).
- Observe cattle regularly for signs of illness.
 - Report sick cattle to the show veterinarian and/or organizers.
- Sick animals should be removed from the exhibition or moved to the designated isolation area.
 - Interaction with the sick animal should be limited to only people caring for the animal.
 - Consider using PPE when caring for sick animals. Wash hands after contacting sick animals.
 - No treatment supplies, feed or water, portable milking equipment and supplies, or grooming supplies should be shared.
- Follow the event's biosecurity plan.
 - Avoid contact with other exhibitor's animals.
 - Do not share feed and water, portable milking equipment and supplies with other exhibitors.

After the Event

- For returning animals, isolate for 30 days before allowing contact with other animals.
 - Do not share equipment between show cattle and other animals
 - Contact your veterinarian if you notice any signs of illness
- Clean and disinfect all equipment you took to the show.
- Consult a health care provider and your state or local public health department if you or any of your family members develop conjunctivitis ["pink eye"] or influenza-like signs (e.g., fever, chills, muscle aches, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, vomiting, and/or diarrhea).
 - Tell your healthcare provider you work with dairy cattle.

EPA disinfectants that are effective against influenza viruses: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-m-registered-antimicrobial-products-label-claims-avian-influenza>

CDC Recommendations for use of household bleach: <https://www.cdc.gov/hygiene/about/cleaning-and-disinfecting-with-bleach.html>