With high focus on the implications on HPAI in the dairy industry, remember that good biosecurity and best management practices have been the mainstay of a healthy dairy herd since we learned that illness and disease are transmitted by bacteria and viruses. Many hours of training and hard work are invested to prepare healthy, high-quality animals for competition. Exhibition of animals is a rewarding experience. Unfortunately, even healthy animals entered in fairs are at risk for exposure to disease.

Fair and exhibitions may pose a potential threat to individual animal health. The commingling of animals of different species, breeds, and ages, from multiple premises and herd management backgrounds, creates an environment for potential exposure and spread of animal diseases. The stresses of travel, close confinement, and a changing environment, may compromise an animal’s resistance to disease. People attending the fair can also contribute to potential disease spread by simply walking through the barns. At the end of the fair, animals that return to their home premises may also pose a risk of disease spread to their home herd.

Biosecurity refers to measures taken to prevent the introduction of new disease agents into a herd. Commingling of animals, multiple human contacts, and contaminated equipment or milkhouse floors represent the greatest threats for disease exposure and spread at a fair. To minimize risks, fair exhibitors can implement a Fair Biosecurity Plan (FBP). The objective of a FBP is to minimize exposure to disease and to prevent or limit disease spread from the fair to the home premises. Even the best FBP may not eliminate all risk of disease exposure; each step taken will reduce the potential. Successful FBP include the following practices:

- Be aware and understand current federal and state regulations concerning exhibitions ([Iowa fairs order AI-24-031](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-m-registered-antimicrobial-products-label-claims-avian-influenza))
- Collect sufficient contact information from exhibitors,
- To restrict direct animal contact with other animals, people, and livestock equipment,
- To clean and disinfect equipment, and
- To isolate and remove sick animals.
- Have handwashing stations and hand sanitizer available for everyone at the fair

**Biosecurity Before the Fair**

Disease prevention and fair biosecurity start before exhibitors leave home. Only healthy animals should be entered in the fair. Before animals leave the home premises, the herd veterinarian should examine each animal to ensure healthy animals enter the fairgrounds recognizing some animals with need to have a CVI or testing applicable HPAI testing. Tools and equipment may harbor disease agents. To minimize disease spread from the home premises to the fair, before packing for transport, clean and disinfect:

- Feed equipment: buckets, feeders, and hay racks.
- Cleaning utensils: shovels, pitch forks, grooming equipment: clippers and brushers and wheelbarrows.
- Cleaning vehicle and trailer (inside and outside).
- Use approved disinfectants that are safe for human and animal contact: [https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-m-registered-antimicrobial-products-label-claims-avian-influenza](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-m-registered-antimicrobial-products-label-claims-avian-influenza)
- Avoid transporting animals from different premises in the same trailer.

**Biosecurity at the Fair**

- Change clothing, hats, and shoes used at the fair before and after doing chores at home,
- Limit animal-animal contact with nose-to-nose barriers
- Limit animal-human contact, especially to the face and udder
- Avoid sharing equipment with other exhibitors unless you thoroughly clean and disinfect between use, cover feed and equipment to reduce risk of contamination.
- *Use your own milking equipment and never share milkers between exhibitors.* If the show requires you to use their equipment, wash and sanitize the milker before using. Ensure raw milk is disposed of properly, limiting spills and human contact,
- At the end of the fair, clean all animals returning home and disinfect all equipment before loading the trailer.
• Unused feed, hay, and bedding should be discarded at the fairgrounds, not taken home,
• Designate isolation areas and plans for milk discarded from sick cows
• Acquire NIOSH approved PPE for fair workers/organizers, if needed
• Sanitize stabling area before allowing other animals to enter

Biosecurity After the Fair
The possibility of animal exposure to disease agents can occur with even the best biosecurity practices at the fair. Since they may be harboring disease agents without clinical signs, your protocols should include:
• Consult your veterinarian to develop an isolation plan suitable for your premises and herd.
• Animals returning from the fair should be isolated from other animals, wildlife and pets.
• Monitor animals in isolation daily for signs of illness and contact the herd veterinarian if any unusual symptoms are observed.
• To minimize the chance of disease spread to the main herd, modify your chore routine to care for isolated fair animals last.
• Change your clothes after completing chores for isolated animals.
• Consult a health care provider and state or local public health department if anyone develop influenza-like illness (e.g., fever or chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, tiredness, and/or vomiting and diarrhea).

Use of fair biosecurity is a good management practice. These practices contribute to keeping your animals healthy and help to protect all Iowa livestock. As conditions change, IDALS and the state veterinarian will ultimately decide what changes will be required for county and regional dairy shows. The most current (June 24 2024) recommendations for Dairy Cattle livestock exhibitions from USDA APHIS can be found here: [https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/guidance-dairy-cattle-livestock-exhibition.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/guidance-dairy-cattle-livestock-exhibition.pdf)

To determine what your animal needs to come to the fair to meet the Fair Order requirements (county rules may differ):

- Any dairy cattle originating from a HPAI affected herd are prohibited from exhibition.
- ALL Dairy Cattle MUST have a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) issued within 7 days of arriving to an exhibition. Dairy Cattle are defined as Lactating Dairy Cows, heifers, dry cows, and bull calves.
- In addition to the Certificate of Veterinary Inspection, an accredited veterinarian must collect and submit milk samples from each of the following:
  1. The individual lactating cow intended for exhibition,
  2. A sample from the bulk milk tank, representing the entire herd, and
  3. Individual samples from lactating dairy cattle in the sick or hospital pens.
- Note that a negative bulk tank and sick pen results must accompany heifers being shown. In addition, dairy bucket bottle calves and dairy beef IF they are originating from a premise where there are lactating dairy cattle must have negative tank and sick pen individuals tests.

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Dairy Team, Fred Hall, 6-1-2024: updated 7-2-2024