



NEWS RELEASE

Texas Animal Health Commission
“Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893”
Dee Ellis, DVM, MPA • Executive Director

P.O. Box 12966 • Austin, Texas 78711 • (800) 550-8242 • www.tahc.texas.gov
For more information contact the Communications/PR Dept. at 1-512-719-0710 or at bonnie.ramirez@tahc.texas.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 14, 2014

TAHC Visiting Major Stock Shows to Discuss Biosecurity Practices in the Event of an Animal Disease Outbreak

AUSTIN – The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) is currently visiting with major stock shows and rodeos to discuss good biosecurity practices in the event of an animal disease outbreak. Practicing and implementing sound biosecurity measures is critical in keeping Texas’ animals disease free and marketable.

Having a proper biosecurity plan in place to execute in the event that an animal disease is introduced while a major stock show and rodeo is taking place will reduce the chances of an infectious disease being spread by people, animals, equipment, etc.

Anytime animals are congregated at events, owners increase the chance that their animal(s) may be exposed to an infectious disease agent.

By following these simple guidelines you can help minimize that risk.

- Consult your veterinarian to establish an appropriate vaccination program for your livestock prior to attending an event.
- Before stalling your animal at an event, make sure the stall has been cleaned and disinfected. Always use clean, fresh bedding.
- Minimize your animal(s) from having direct contact with unknown animals, especially nose to nose contact.
- Use your own water and feed buckets. Avoid letting your animal(s) drink from a communal water trough. Fill water buckets from a faucet.
- Do not share grooming equipment or tack. If you must, then wash and disinfect it before returning to your own animal(s).
- Wash your hands thoroughly after handling other animals, to minimize the risk of transferring a disease back to your animal.
- Before returning home from an event, clean up your equipment (boots, tack, grooming supplies, buckets, etc.) to help reduce the risk of transporting an infectious agent back home. Consider washing and disinfecting your trailer when you return home.
- If possible, isolate your returning animal(s) for 2 weeks or at least prevent nose to nose contact with your other animals.

Don't forget to consult your veterinarian concerning these and other steps you can follow which may reduce the risk of your animal acquiring an infectious disease while traveling.

Biosecurity suggestions for event organizers:

- Minimize nose-to-nose contact between animals where possible.
- Minimize spread by human hands (limit public access, provide hand sanitizer, establish restricted areas in front of stalls and trailers, post hand-washing signs).
- Minimize spread by shared tack (post signs advising participants not to share equipment).
- Solid, high-walled stalls are ideal to minimize spread of infectious nasal droplets.

While at the show, follow these simple precautions to protect yourself and others:

- Wash your hands often with soap or use an alcohol-based hand cleaner, especially after you cough or sneeze or have contact with animals.
- Do not eat or drink near animals or animal pens.
- During the fair/exhibition, monitor your animals for any signs of illness and report any illness to the veterinarian on-call.
- When you come home from a fair/exhibition, be sure to quarantine your animals, disinfect your trailer and equipment (show boxes, feed pans, etc.), and watch for any illness in your animals.

If you are visiting an animal exhibit (Petting Zoo):

- Find out where hand-washing stations are located.
- Always wash your hands after petting animals or touching the animal enclosure, especially before eating and drinking.
- Running water and soap are best. Use hand gels if running water and soap are not available.
- Keep food and drinks out of animal areas.
- Do not share your food with animals.
- Do not eat or drink raw (unpasteurized) dairy products.
- Never allow children to put their hands or objects (For example: pacifiers) in their mouth while interacting with animals.

“Livestock exhibitions are an enriching and rewarding experience for our youth,” said Dr. Thomas (TR) Lansford, Assistant Executive Director over Animal Health Programs. “Implementing simple biosecurity measures to prevent disease spread and having an established plan of action to address disease outbreaks if they occur protects that experience for both exhibitors and exhibitions alike.”

For more information about biosecurity measures and plans, contact the TAHC at 1-800-550-8242 or contact your local regional office.

The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) strives to keep Texas' livestock disease free, ultimately allowing for better marketability and commerce.

###