

H5N1 response to a positive case at exhibition

This document is a short overview of a Board response to H5N1 detected at an exhibition.

Mechanisms in place to protect animals at exhibitions

Before lactating dairy cattle can attend an exhibition, they must meet the Board's testing requirements and have both a negative H5 test result within seven days of arriving at the event and a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection indicating the animal was checked over by a veterinarian for any signs of illness. Negative test results are valid for 10 days from collection. Exhibitors may have to collect samples at an exhibition if they want to stay past day 10 or attend another show.

Once at the event, an official veterinarian is responsible for looking over incoming animals and doing daily checks of the animals for any signs of illness. If the veterinarian suspects a sick animal, it is sent home or separated to an isolation area away from people and other livestock. If the veterinarian suspects H5N1 in cattle, that animal will be sent home to be tested.

Responding to H5N1 detections at exhibitions

If a lactating dairy cow tests positive while at a show, the affected animal and livestock and poultry from the same premises will be sent back to the origin premises and quarantined along with the rest of the herd. The Board will initiate a disease investigation and conduct bulk tank testing (or other approved testing if no bulk tank is available).

Simultaneously, part of the Board's disease investigation will be to determine what other animals at the exhibition were exposed. Exposed animals will not be automatically quarantined and may remain at the exhibition. They will be investigated from highest to lowest risk and follow-up testing will be conducted on-site for all exposed lactating dairy cattle. Other animals at the event, especially poultry and other cattle (such as non-lactating heifers and beef breeds) will be monitored for illness and continue to receive daily inspection by the official veterinarian. Owners of animals at greatest exposure risk will be provided guidance from the Board on what to look for and additional biosecurity recommendations. As is always good practice when returning home from an exhibition, exhibitors should isolate their animals from the rest of their home herd/flock and monitor for illness. Producers will be encouraged to work with their veterinarian to monitor for clinical signs and test for diseases as recommended.

Any potential human exposures to H5N1 positive animals are handled by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). The animal owner and other exhibitors would be contacted and interviewed about animal contact and

illness history and provided testing recommendations and antiviral medications as appropriate. Visitors to the fair would be notified by the Board and MDH with recommendations for symptom monitoring and testing.

If additional cases are discovered

Animals returning from an exhibition where H5N1 is detected in any species will be guided to isolate their animals when returning from the exhibition. If any of those animals develops clinical signs of infection and tests positive for H5N1, the Board will initiate an investigation on the premises and issue a quarantine.

Good biosecurity at exhibitions

Don't share equipment with other exhibitors and minimize animal-to-animal and animal-to-human contact while exhibiting. Avoid communal water sources, supply food and water from home, and report any health concerns to the official veterinarian.