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### **Biosecurity for 4-H Livestock Exhibitors**

Reducing the risk of disease in your project animals begins with selecting healthy animals. Project animals should come from farms that have a well-developed health program. Be sure to ask questions about the health of the herd. Then work with your veterinarian to develop a health program to fit your situation. Your health program probably will be fairly simple and may require only some vaccinations, parasite control, and a sound feeding program.

If you plan to exhibit your project animal at fairs and shows, exposing it to other animals, equipment used on other animals, or livestock trucks and trailers will increase the chances of your animal contracting and spreading a disease. Once exposed to other animals, your animal possibly could bring a problem back to your farm.

#### **Practical Methods of Reducing Your Biosecurity Risk**

- Isolate all purchased animals for a minimum of two weeks.
- When you return from a show or other situation where there was contact with other animals, isolate your show animals for a minimum of two weeks.
- Watch your animals closely for at least two weeks after any exposure to observe any signs of developing disease. Call your veterinarian at the first sign of sickness.
- Make sure trucks and trailers used to haul your animals are clean and disinfected.
- Avoid sharing of grooming equipment and feed and water containers. Clean and disinfect your equipment when you return from shows.
- Discourage fair visitors from petting or feeding your animals.
- Wash with soap and water after handling your animals and put on clean clothes. Keep your boots and shoes clean. Wear rubber boots when working with your animals and disinfect them after each use.
- Be cautious about who has contact with your animals. Visitors to your farm should wear clean clothes that have not been in contact with other animals. Make sure their shoes and boots are clean and disinfected. Provide visitors with plastic disposable boots and coveralls for maximum protection.
- At the fair or show, be sure your animals have access to clean water and feed in containers you bring from home. Minimize nose-to-nose contact with other animals as much as possible.

Exhibiting livestock is an important part of the 4-H Livestock Education experience. By following these simple suggestions, you can help keep your livestock healthy during the show season.

References:

Biosecurity For Youth Livestock Exhibitors, Gary L. Bowman, D.V.M. and William P. Shulaw, D.V.M. Ohio State University Extension Factsheet, 6/2001

<http://ohioline.osu.edu/vme-fact/0007.html>