

Sample Swine Influenza Exhibitor Family Letter

July 2, 2018

Dear Spartan County Fair swine exhibition families;

On Tuesday, June 30, four pigs at the Spartan County Fair were exhibiting signs of illness. On Wednesday, July 1, the Michigan State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory confirmed that three hogs tested positive for a variant of swine influenza. Samples have been sent to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa for final confirmation and typing.

After consulting the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's state veterinarians' office, all livestock at the fair were auctioned off as expected and will be shipped for processing via the normal channels and policies. Any animals with a fever will not be shipped until fevers are no longer present. Swine influenza in pigs is not a food safety concern and influenza cannot be contracted by eating cooked pork or pork products.

Families who exhibited animals at the Spartan County Fair should take all the proper biosecurity measures to ensure they do not potentially transmit the disease to their property. These include:

- Changing shoes when going into or leaving animal areas.
- Washing hands with hot soap and water before and after handling animals.
- Cleaning boots and all equipment that was taken to the fairgrounds with soap and hot water or disinfectants.
- Not sharing equipment with other 4-H'ers or farmers.
- Restricting access to animals – not allowing other people to visit your livestock.
- Having separate clothes and shoes just for working with your animals.
- Separating animals that show any sign of illness and caring for them only after caring for healthy animals.

Swine influenza is a zoonotic disease, meaning they it can be transmitted to other species. In an abundance of caution, exhibitors are encouraged to carefully monitor any animals they have at home for signs of illness. Symptoms such as fever, lethargy, going off feed, discharge from the nose or eyes, or breathing difficulties could be signs that animal has contracted influenza. 4-H'ers should report any changes or abnormalities in animals to a local veterinarian.

Because swine influenza is a zoonotic disease, it can also be transmitted to humans. Exhibitors and any family members who visited the swine barn should monitor their health for symptoms that include:

- A fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit, or higher; or feeling feverish

- A cough and/or sore throat
- A runny or stuffy nose
- Headaches and/or body aches
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea (most common in children)

If you exhibit these symptoms, please visit your doctor and let them know that you attended the Spartan County Fair.

In addition, we ask that you cooperate with the Spartan County Health Department (SCHD) and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) as they gather information on any potential human illness and/or contact with swine at the Spartan County Fair. Furthermore, if you or anyone in your family has been or becomes sick or symptomatic, please contact the SCHD during business hours at 517-222-0000 or after-hours at 517-222-1111.

Sincerely,