

Poultry Exhibition Cancellation Guidance

Ban on poultry exhibition in Ohio for 2015

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We know avian influenza continues to be a significant concern in the Midwest. We recognize the importance of Ohio's poultry industry to the state's economy, including the livelihood of individuals, families and businesses. We also fully support the difficult decision the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) made to cancel all live poultry exhibitions this year. This includes all junior fair, open shows and exhibitions, and all other gatherings of birds for show or for sale, including auctions and swap meets. We also recognize the importance of our longstanding partnership with Ohio's fairs and the educational opportunities they provide to youth and their families.

- While exhibition at a county, independent or state fair is a highlight for many young people and their families, we also know enrollment in specific projects, completion of record books, engagement in specific learning opportunities and participation in skillathons and similar knowledge-based exercises are what make the 4-H project a meaningful and complete experience.
- We recognize that many young people involved in 4-H poultry projects are impacted by this necessary decision and will not have an opportunity to exhibit their live poultry projects. It is important to give young people the supports they need to ensure they have a productive learning experience as they complete their poultry projects. While completion of a 4-H project is not contingent upon exhibition at a fair, it is recognized that this is a meaningful part of the experience for many 4-H members.
- Enrollment and project possession deadlines are made and enforced at the local level, with many considerations that go into making those decisions. Given the cancellation by ODA of live poultry exhibition, *substituting or changing 4-H projects is not an option that is supported by the Ohio 4-H Youth Development program.*
- There are many alternatives local leaders can consider as options for 4-H members to have fun and meaningful experiences at their fair. These include, but are not limited to: (1) educational exhibit or display about their project that does not include a live animal; (2) project interview judging, where youth are asked questions about their poultry project, which may or may not include supporting materials or displays; (3) demonstrations, speaking contests and skits about their poultry project; (4) skillathons to test knowledge learned and application of new knowledge in a fun and experiential setting; (5) avian bowl that tests knowledge in a quiz bowl type setting; (6) poultry showmanship to test youth's knowledge, as well as how to handle poultry, identify parts, etc., using a stuffed animal; (7) photo or poster contest; (8) video contest; (9) team relay races to identify equipment, breeds or responses to other knowledge-based questions; and (10) scavenger hunt.
- It is recognized many young people will have incurred expenses for their poultry projects and were relying on the livestock sale at their county fair to cover some or all of those expenses. We encourage 4-H professionals, fair board members, sale committee members and others to work collaboratively to identify alternatives to selling live poultry projects.
- With the ban on poultry exhibition in place, Ohio 4-H stands ready to assist local 4-H professionals and county fair boards with ideas and solutions. We believe very strongly that by working together, they, along with fair board members and local volunteers, will be creative in identifying alternatives and in helping 4-H members have a successful and meaningful educational experience.



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