



June 7, 2015

Dear Brown County 4-H Poultry Exhibitors,

The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) announced a ban on all live bird exhibitions in Ohio on Tuesday June 2 due to avian influenza prevention. The ban includes county and independent fairs, the Ohio State Fair, and all other gatherings of birds for show or sale, including auctions and swap meets. This means there will be no birds at the 2015 Brown County Fair.

A local committee of 4-H Volunteers, FFA Advisors, Brown County Junior Fair Board Superintendents and Senior Fair Board members met with OSU Extension Educators and discussed options for youth who signed up for poultry projects in 2015. The committee discussed options to permit participation in the Brown County Fair even though they will not be bringing their live birds to the fair this year. The following information is what the committee has proposed, **pending ODA approval**.

Pending ODA approval:

It's the committee's intention to still have a poultry show that youth can participate in at the fair. Although the poultry show will happen without live birds at the fair, each exhibitor will be required to raise an animal and complete a poster that will replace the bird in the fair show. The poster requirements and details on project completion will be coming at a later date. Market poultry exhibitors who complete the requirements that are set in the coming information, and participate in the show will be eligible to sell their market poultry projects through the sale ring at the 2015 Brown County Fair.

Meat chicken orders still need to be submitted to May Carrington by June 10th. However, we are only offering single fryer market chicken projects and no meat pen projects. If you have already submitted your paperwork to May and would like to order change your order please contact her no later than June 10th and her contact information is at the end of this letter.

Youth who are taking market turkey, ducks or geese should have already purchased their birds and should continue to raise them for the project and we will provide information at a later date on how they will be handled.

All other poultry projects such as wildlife, egg production, and fancy will also be able to complete their projects with the modified show requirements and should continue raising them the same as in years past. With the understanding they cannot bring the birds to the fair but can show with a poster or a clean clutch of eggs depending on the project.



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This is Ohio Department of Agriculture's ruling on the avian influenza and want to be sure you understand that there will be **NO BIRDS** at the Brown County Fair (or any other fair) this year. This includes **any** animal with feathers and wings. For more information on the Avian Influenza please refer to the Ohio Department of Agriculture's website:

<http://www.ohioagriculture.gov/divs/ai/ai.aspx?div=ai-hpai.htm>.

Based on Ohio 4-H policy, and the April 1st Enrollment for Brown County, youth are not permitted to change projects.

If you have any questions please contact May Carrington, Junior Fair Small Animal Superintendent at 937-441-0336 or may.carrington@allegion.com, or the OSU Extension Office at 937-378-6716.

We would like to end this letter to you with information shared from the OSU Extension State 4-H Office:

Ohio 4-H establishes project enrollment deadlines to ensure equity among all members within a given county. Enrollment deadlines in turn establish the official starting point for members taking projects for evaluation and competition. Ohio 4-H project enrollment deadlines established by each county for 2015 cannot be changed.

Agricultural and food animal production involves both rewards and risks. Weather and diseases are factors that can and do negatively impact production. Avian influenza is one such disease. Part of the overall 4-H youth development experience is providing positive and supportive environments and experiences in which youth learn from the thrill of successes. Equally important, youth members also learn to cope with the sting of disappointments. The negative impacts of avian influenza are certainly a tremendous disappointment. At the same time, it is also an opportunity to learn important life lessons in effectively coping with and responding to challenging situations. Youth will benefit from adult support to help them develop effective knowledge, skills, and strategies to do so. Yes, they won't be showing the live animal they originally had intended to show, but they will be learning how a disease can affect an animal and an industry.

-Tom Archer, State 4-H Leader; Kirk Bloir, Associate State 4-H Leader; and Lucinda Miller, State Specialist - Companion & Small Animal Programs

Sincerely,

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County Extension Director

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