



For Immediate Release

August 3, 2012

STATE OFFICIALS CONTINUE FLU SURVEILLANCE AND PREVENTION

Ohio Departments of Agriculture and Health Monitoring State and County Fairs

COLUMBUS — The Ohio Departments of Agriculture (ODA) and Health (ODH), along with local health officials and representatives from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), continue to monitor influenza-like illness in animals and humans throughout the remainder of the Ohio State Fair as well as county fair season in Ohio, and today reminded Ohioans to exercise common sense health practices while around animals.

State Veterinarian Dr. Tony Forshey has veterinarians monitoring hogs weighing-in for exhibition at the Ohio State Fair and taking the temperatures of any that look ill. ODA is also contacting county fair boards and 4-H clubs with information that can be displayed in livestock barns while urging the installation of additional hand sanitizers.

ODH continues to partner with local health departments and health care providers across the state on any reports of human illness. Individuals who have reported close contact with swine and are exhibiting flu-like systems will undergo testing. Samples will be sent to the ODH laboratory for preliminary testing and then to CDC for confirmation. ODH will provide notice of any additional H3N2v human case confirmations.

With the Ohio State Fair running through Sunday, August 5, ODA and ODH remind residents and visitors that fair attendance is safe. Those attending the fair should remember:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and running water before and after exposure to animals.
- Never eat, drink or put things in your mouth in animal areas, and don't take food or drink into animal areas.
- Young children, pregnant women, people 65 and older and people with weakened immune systems should be extra careful around animals.
- If you have animals – including swine – watch them for signs of illness and call a veterinarian if you suspect they might be sick.
- Avoid close contact with animals that look or act ill, when possible.
- Avoid contact with swine if you are experiencing flu-like symptoms.

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More information is available from ODH at: <http://bit.ly/OhioH3N2vUpdates>.

Chronology

- 8/2 ODH sends MedScape alert to all subscribing health care providers encouraging them to monitor for influenza-like illness, especially in those who had close contact with swine.
- 8/2 Two swine sent home from Ohio State fair after showing flu-like symptoms; testing of samples underway.
- 8/2 CDC confirms nine individuals who had direct contact with swine at Butler County Fair have Influenza A variant H3N2.
- 8/1 ODA works with the Ohio Expo Commission to move extra hand sanitation stations and informational signage to the O'Neil Swine Arena at the Ohio State Fair.
- 8/1 ODA asks fair exhibitors to take precautions and alerts attending veterinarians to closely monitor swine as they arrive on the fairgrounds for signs of influenza.
- 8/1 ODH investigates flu illness from Butler County fair. Preliminary positive results indicate H3N2v strain of influenza.
- 7/31 ODH notifies local health departments to monitor influenza-like illness in their area.

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