



Department of Health  
Department of Agriculture



Butler County  
Health Department

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## News Release

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August 1, 2012

For Immediate Release

### **HEALTH OFFICIALS INVESTIGATING FLU ILLNESSES FROM BUTLER COUNTY FAIR**

COLUMBUS — The Ohio Departments of Health (ODH) and Agriculture (ODA), along with the Butler County Health Department are actively investigating human illnesses associated with the Butler County Fair. Preliminary laboratory results on ten samples indicate similarities to the influenza virus, (H3N2)v. All individuals in Butler County's investigation had direct contact with swine, however the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have not yet confirmed any of the cases.

Butler County Health Department continues to collect information and is working with ODH and CDC to determine the extent of the illnesses. ODA is asking fair exhibitors to take precautions and is alerting attending veterinarians to closely monitor swine as they arrive on the fairgrounds for signs of influenza.

Fair attendance is safe; visitors should remember to always wash their hands after being in close-proximity to livestock and to keep food and drink out of animal exhibits. All fair animals, especially pigs, are monitored for illness and signs of flu-like symptoms and are checked by veterinarians every day they are at the fair. This is to protect the health of both the people visiting the fair and the other animals in the barns.

Influenza viruses such as H3N2 and its variants are not unusual in swine and can be directly transmitted from swine to people and from people to swine in the same way that all viruses can be transmitted between people. When humans are in close proximity to live infected swine, such as in barns and livestock exhibits at fairs, movement of these viruses can occur back and forth between humans and animals. Influenza viruses cannot be transmitted by eating pork or pork products.

Individuals should always wash hands with soap and water before and after petting or touching any animal. Never eat, drink, or put anything in your mouth in animal areas. Older adults, pregnant women, young children, and people with weakened immune systems should be extra careful around animals.

Ohioans who have direct, routine contact with swine, such as working in swine barns or showing swine at fairs, and have experienced cough or influenza-like illness should contact their health care provider or local health department. Symptoms include cough, sore throat, fever, body aches, and possibly other symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

More information is available from CDC at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/spotlights/safe-fair-going.htm>

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