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For Immediate Release

OHIO DOCUMENTS FIRST H3N2v-ASSOCIATED DEATH

COLUMBUS — The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) today announced the first known H3N2v-associated death. The 61-year-old female Madison County resident passed away earlier this week. Testing at the Ohio Department of Health Laboratory confirmed that the individual had been infected with the H3N2v influenza virus. The patient had multiple other underlying medical conditions, but the influenza virus may have contributed to the death.

The individual had direct contact with swine at the Ross County fair before becoming ill. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the main risk factor for infection is direct exposure to swine. CDC points out that the virus does not spread easily from person-to-person, but limited human-to-human infection has occurred.

“H3N2v, like many other viruses, has the greatest potential to impact those with weakened immune systems,” said Dr. Ted Wymyslo, Director of ODH. “We have been seeing a mild illness in most individuals infected with the H3N2v virus, so there’s no need for alarm. However, it is important for those at-risk individuals to take extra precautions like avoiding swine exhibits to protect themselves.”

Ohio is currently reporting 102 cases of H3N2v statewide. Those with confirmed cases of H3N2v are between the ages of 6 months and 61 years old. Most ill individuals have recovered on their own or were treated and released after a short stay in the hospital.

<i>County of Residence</i>	<i>Number of Confirmed H3N2v Cases</i>
Ashland	1
Athens	8
Butler	17
Champaign	15
Clark	3
Fairfield	1
Franklin	4
Gallia	12
Greene	6
Hamilton	3
Henry	6
Huron	3
Jackson	1
Lake	1
Licking	2
Madison	1
Medina	1
Monroe	2
Montgomery	2
Morrow	1
Preble	1
Richland	2
Ross	7

Union	1
Warren	1

At this time, surveillance indicates that the individuals most likely became ill with the flu virus after exposure to swine. At-risk individuals (children younger than 5 years old, people 65 years and older, pregnant women, and people with certain chronic conditions such as asthma and other lung diseases, diabetes, heart disease, weakened immune system, and neurologic or neurodevelopmental disorders) should avoid exposure to pigs and swine barns during this fair season.

Those attending fairs 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;
- Leave baby strollers parked outside of areas with pigs;
- 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.

If you are sick:

- If you are at high risk and you get flu symptoms, call a health care provider. Tell them about your risk factor, other medical conditions and your flu symptoms. If you have recently been exposed to swine, tell them about that too.
- If you are not at high risk and you get flu symptoms after exposure to pigs, seek medical care as you normally would.

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Chronology

- 8/28 - ODH's School and Adolescent Health program sent information on identifying and preventing the spread of flu to the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio School Nurses Association, Ohio Afterschool Network, Ohio School Board Association, and Ohio school administrators.
- 8/23 - ODH lab testing yields no positive H3N2v results for the first time in several weeks.
- 8/13 - Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) distributes flu testing kits to veterinarians at each upcoming fair to help identify H3N2v cases among swine showing signs of illness at the fair.
- 8/10 - ODH confirms 36 cases of H3N2v in Ohio. A county fair outreach plan is put into motion, with a representative from ODA and ODH, or a local designee, such as the fair veterinarian or health commissioner, visiting every fair to make in-person contact. Dr. Wymyslo, Director of ODH, leads national call with directors of health from each state to provide guidance and support as they identify H3N2v cases in their territories.
- 8/8 - ODH confirms 30 cases of H3N2v in Ohio.
- 8/7 - ODA distributes communication to fair exhibitors and county fair boards across Ohio reiterating the importance of good hygiene to prevent the spread of influenza viruses.
- 8/6 - ODH holds statewide conference call with local health departments to provide an update on the situation; ODA holds statewide conference call with state fair boards.
- 8/5 - CDC confirms additional human cases of H3N2v, bringing the total to 15.
- 8/2 - Two swine sent home from Ohio State Fair after showing flu-like symptoms.

- 8/2 - CDC confirms nine individuals who had direct contact with swine at Butler County Fair have Influenza A variant H3N2.
- 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; ODA also works with the Ohio Expo Commission on hand sanitation stations and informational signage at the Ohio State Fair.
- 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 and health care providers in Ohio to monitor influenza-like illness in their area.

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Note: Case counts will be updated daily on ODH's website: <http://bit.ly/OhioH3N2vUpdates>.