



Information on H5N1 Bird Flu

H5N1 bird flu is currently widespread in wild birds worldwide and has caused **outbreaks in poultry and dairy cows in the U.S.** H5N1 bird flu is a type of influenza virus different from human seasonal influenza viruses. There have been **several human cases of bird flu** in individuals across the U.S. who had close contact with infected dairy cattle or poultry.

While the risk of H5N1 bird flu to the general public is low, animals can carry other illnesses that can make people sick as well.

Additional Resources

CDC | Tips for Staying Healthy at Animal Exhibits: tiny.cc/k6z7zz

NJDA | Animal Health: tiny.cc/o6z7zz

NJDOH | Novel Influenza: tiny.cc/s6z7zz

CDC | Food Safety, Raw Milk cdc.gov/food-safety/foods/raw-milk.html

Rutgers, New Jersey 4-H | 2024 County Fairs: tiny.cc/t6z7zz

NJDA | Biosecurity: tiny.cc/u6z7zz

NJDA | 2024 Fair/Show Animal Health Recommendations: tiny.cc/i6z7zz

NJDA | 2024 Fair/Show Animal Health Recommendations Addendum: Biosecurity for Exhibition Dairy Cattle: <http://tiny.cc/z6z7zz>

CDC | Considerations & Information for Fair Organizers to Help Prevent Influenza: tiny.cc/57z7zz

National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians | Measures to Prevent Disease Associated with Animals in Public Settings: bit.ly/46aJfZA

EPA | Find the Repellent that is Right for You: tiny.cc/5j08zz

Developed in collaboration with
NJ Department of Agriculture



Tips to Stay Healthy Around Animals

at Fairs and Animal Exhibitions

nj.gov/health

When you interact with animals at farms, petting zoos, agricultural fairs, and other exhibitions this summer or fall, remember that animals can carry germs that cause illness in people, even if they appear healthy. The New Jersey Departments of Health (NJDOH) and Agriculture (NJDA) encourage you to stay safe around animals – for your health and theirs.

Anyone can get sick from germs that animals can carry, but certain people are more likely to get sick or have more severe illness and should take extra precautions at animal exhibits.

These include:

- children younger than 5 years old
- people with weakened immune systems
- pregnant individuals
- adults over 65



Tips to Stay Healthy & Safe for Adults & Children

- ✔ **Wash your hands thoroughly** with soap and water* immediately after:
 - Touching animals or anything in their living area
 - Handling animal food, supplies, bowls, or equipment
 - Leaving animal areas, even if you didn't touch the animals
 - Touching or removing clothes or shoes worn around animals

** If soap and running water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Wash your hands as soon as you can.*

- ✔ **Avoid hand-to-mouth activities** (i.e., nail biting, eating, finger sucking)
- ✔ **If you're sick, stay home.** Avoid spreading illness to other people or animals.
- ✔ **If you've traveled internationally within the last five days,** don't visit with livestock to prevent the spread of disease to NJ farm animals.
- ✔ **Prevent kicks and bites:**
 - Don't stand directly behind an animal and always approach with caution.
 - Don't put your fingers near an animal's mouth or grab their tails.
 - If bitten by an animal, wash the bite thoroughly and seek medical care.
- ✔ **Don't eat or drink in areas where animals live or roam.**
- ✔ **Don't share your food with the animals.**

- ✔ **Supervise children around animals**
 - Don't let children sit or play on the ground in animal areas
 - Don't bring items such as toys or pacifiers into animal areas
 - Children 5 years and younger should not have direct contact with reptiles, amphibians, or live poultry; these animals are more likely to make them sick.
 - Help children wash hands thoroughly after interacting with animals.
- ✔ **Don't consume raw (unpasteurized) milk or soft cheeses and products made from raw milk.** The sale of raw milk directly to consumers is illegal in NJ.

Tick and Mosquito Bite Prevention

- ✔ **Use EPA-registered insect repellent.**
 - Follow product label instructions and reapply as directed.
 - Apply sunscreen first and repellent second.
- ✔ **Dress appropriately.** Wear light-colored, long sleeves and pants tucked into socks to prevent ticks from getting under clothes.
- ✔ **Shower after being outside** to wash off unattached ticks.
- ✔ **Check your and your child's body for ticks.** (Tips to safely remove ticks: tiny.cc/mg08zz)
- ✔ **Seek medical attention** following a known tick bite if you develop a rash, infection, fever, or other symptoms.