

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | July 12, 2019

Take precautions to stay healthy at summer events

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) reminds people to take healthy precautions while enjoying summer activities and events such as fairs, festivals, carnivals, and rodeos. Certain germs, like *Campylobacter*, *E. coli* and influenza, can be passed back and forth between humans and animals.

“Summer is a great time to enjoy outdoor activities and gatherings with friends, family, and pets,” said Laura Cronquist, an epidemiologist with the NDDoH. “Taking simple precautions such as washing your hands with soap and clean, running water before and after being around animals and staying home when you are sick will help reduce the spread of germs.”

Recommendations:

- Wash your hands before and after petting or touching any animal or anything in the areas where animals are housed. You don't have to touch an animal to get sick. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Avoid contact with any animal or viewing animals in enclosed spaces, such as barns, if you are sick or if the animal looks sick.
- Do not eat, drink, or put anything in your mouth while in petting zoos or animal viewing areas.
- Do not take toys, pacifiers, cups, baby bottles, strollers, or similar items into animal viewing/petting areas.
- Avoid bringing your pet. Consider leaving your pet at home and never leave pets in cars.
- NEVER touch an animal unless invited to do so by the animal's owner.
- Always adhere to posted instructions, notices, and warnings when visiting animal viewing areas.

Anyone at risk for serious complications from infectious diseases like influenza or *E. coli* should consider avoiding contact with live animals and their environments at fairs or similar events. High-risk individuals include young children, pregnant women, people 65 years and older, and those with long-term health conditions. People with respiratory conditions should consider avoiding enclosed spaces where livestock are present, such as barns and indoor arenas.

Anyone who becomes sick after contact with livestock or other animals should contact a health care provider and tell them about the animal contact. For more information about these topics, visit the Division of Disease Control website at www.ndhealth.gov/disease/ or call 701-328-2378.

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For More Information Contact:

Laura Cronquist

Division of *Disease Control*

State Lab | 2635 East Main Ave. | Bismarck, ND 58506-5520

PHONE: (701) 328-2378 | FAX: (701) 328-2499 | EMAIL: lcronquist@nd.gov

www.ndhealth.gov