



# Animal Care and Welfare Guide

## Guidelines for Assuring Appropriate Care of Animals in a Public Setting

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This document is intended for individuals managing animal events. Exhibitors participating in fairs, livestock shows, horse shows and rodeos have a chance to practice responsible behavior while taking care of their animals and themselves. Exhibitors need to work cooperatively to provide an environment that meets the needs of exhibit animals and is conducive to encouraging the public to view exhibits in a positive light.

### Before the fair or show:

1. Staff should involve exhibitors, fair board members and county animal show superintendents in an annual review of their local situation, including housing, facilities and the care of animals in a public setting.
2. Communicate with exhibitors, and advise them on how to act responsibly according to the educational material provided on animal care. This is an educational opportunity.
3. Use guidelines that reflect accepted science-based standards for care of animals. An example of these guidelines can be found at: [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/MDA\\_Care\\_Farm\\_Animals\\_GAAMP\\_129713\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/MDA_Care_Farm_Animals_GAAMP_129713_7.pdf)
4. Provide the Michigan Department of Agriculture Health Requirements for livestock exhibited in Michigan to animal show exhibitors that include withdrawal periods and penalties associated with off-label use of drugs. [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mda/ExReq\\_225448\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mda/ExReq_225448_7.pdf).
5. Arrange for a veterinarian to be present or on call, and work with animal show superintendents on procedures for immediate contact with a veterinarian in case of an animal care emergency.
6. Provide the local and state anti-cruelty laws to fair board members, volunteer animal show superintendents and Extension staff members. [http://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(ic02m1ivjadels455atcha45\)\)/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-328-1931-ix.pdf](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(ic02m1ivjadels455atcha45))/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-328-1931-ix.pdf).
7. Develop a strategy with animal show superintendents to ensure a high level of care for exhibit animals during the fair. Learn procedures to follow if animal cruelty laws are violated.
8. Talk to local law enforcement officials about concerns related to animal activism at fairs. Ask for advice on how to respond to individuals or group protests to animal activities or conditions at the fair.
9. Designate one person as the spokesperson for your fair on the issue of animal care. Ask all exhibitors and staff to refer inquiries to this person. The spokesperson should relate facts as provided in educational materials or policies adopted by the fair board.

### During the fair or show:

10. Consider having a meeting at the beginning of the fair or show to review animal care responsibilities and guidelines, suggestions for dealing with questions, etc. Remind people to act professionally at all times.

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11. Provide these references at the fair office:

- Name of the designated spokesperson
- Educational materials referred to in this publication
- Local and state anti-cruelty laws
- Strategy to ensure a high level of care for exhibit animals during the fair
- Animal care guidelines
- Withdrawal periods and penalties associated with off-label use of drugs
- Procedures for immediate contact with a veterinarian in case of emergency, including name and phone number

12. If an exhibitor is asked numerous questions about the care of the animal on exhibit, have the exhibitor refer the person to the designated spokesperson for more information about animal care.

13. If an exhibitor thinks the person asking the questions is being disruptive, the exhibitor should ask the person to visit with the designated spokesperson.

14. If a person disagrees with practices observed at the county fair, spokespersons should not argue or overreact. Refer the person to the factual material. Offer the person the opportunity to write his or her opinions to the fair board. Provide the address for the fair board president.

## **After the fair or show:**

15. Document with the fair board and Michigan Department of Agriculture, all contact between exhibitors and groups concerned with the treatment of animals.

16. Meet with exhibitors, fair board members and county livestock superintendents to evaluate the exhibit experience. Use the evaluation session to plan future exhibit experiences that make a significant contribution to your fair.

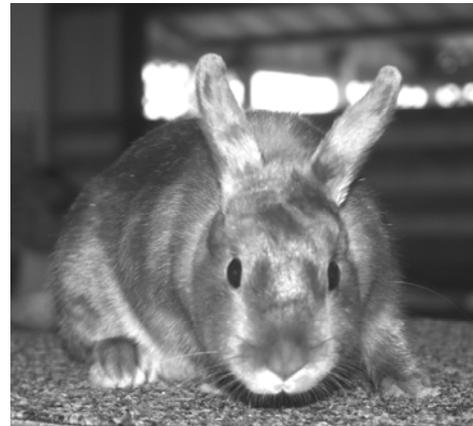


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## Suggestions for What Event Managers Can Do

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1. Accomplish the following:
  - Use guidelines or recommendations for the care and well-being of animals; this demonstrates a responsibility to promote best practices.
  - Inform local police of potential issues related to animal exhibits and shows so that if they are called, they have a better understanding of how to respond.
  - Become familiar with the local “permit to demonstrate” process, rules and criteria. Check before the event to determine if a permit has been issued.
  - Check the “permit to demonstrate” of any group or individual that attempts or desires to picket or demonstrate within property boundaries or public areas adjacent to the fairgrounds.
  - Ensure that groups with legal permits adhere to the rules.
2. Do not overreact. Animal activists generally want media coverage. If they are demonstrating, they will get media attention even if you do nothing. They will receive tremendous publicity, and probably sympathy, if you become defensive or argumentative.
3. Do not argue. Appoint a designated, trained spokesperson to handle necessary responses regarding animal welfare questions. If you are put in a situation where you must answer questions or discuss animal projects, stick with facts. If you are unsure of yourself or are being overwhelmed, politely end the discussion and refer him/her to the trained spokesperson.
4. It is not the correct approach to immediately call the police if someone demonstrates. First, ask to see the permit to demonstrate. If a permit is provided, make sure all rules are followed. If a permit was not obtained, notify them of the legal requirements.
5. Communicate with exhibitors regarding this situation. Emphasize numbers 2 and 3.
6. Assure the proper care of animals at all times. It should be remembered that the best examples of animal welfare are the farmers, 4-H'ers and FFA members who actually provide the best possible care for their animals.
7. Be aware that demonstrators, those harassing, or those attempting to interact with exhibitors may be trained in confrontation techniques and have “canned” answers to your potential questions. Be polite and courteous and follow numbers 2 and 3.
8. Use common sense and be professional and polite at all times.



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## Suggestions for What Volunteers and Parents Can Do

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1. Work with your local fair board to use guidelines or recommendations for the care and well-being of animals; this demonstrates a responsibility to promote best practices.
2. Do not overreact. Animal activists generally want media coverage. If they are demonstrating, they will get media attention even if you do nothing. They will receive tremendous publicity, and probably sympathy, if you become defensive or argumentative.
3. Do not argue. Your organization or fair board should have a designated, trained person to handle necessary responses regarding animal welfare questions. If you are put in a situation where you must answer questions or discuss animal projects, stick with facts. If you are unsure of yourself or are being overwhelmed, politely end the discussion and refer him/her to the trained spokesperson.
4. It is not the correct approach to immediately call the police if someone demonstrates. If proper pre-event preparation occurs, the superintendent and trained spokesperson should know if a permit to demonstrate was issued. Contact the superintendent or trained spokesperson first.
5. Assure the proper care of animals at all times. This should not be an issue, since part of the 4-H or FFA experience is to learn how to properly care for animals. It should be remembered that the best examples of animal welfare are actually the farmers, 4-H'ers and FFA members who provide the best possible care for their animals.
6. Be aware that demonstrators, those harassing, or those attempting to interact with animal exhibitors may be trained in confrontation techniques, and have "canned" answers to your potential questions.
7. Use common sense and be professional and polite at all times.



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## Suggestions for What Youth Exhibitors Can Do

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1. If approached by a person asking questions about what you are doing, why you are doing it, the management practices used to raise your animal, etc., and if you feel uncomfortable, excuse yourself and walk away. Tell the person that specific questions are to be directed to the designated spokesperson.
2. Tell your fair superintendent, spokesperson, parent or leader of any interaction with persons you think are animal activists. This could include people who accuse you of being cruel to your animals because they are to be used for food or those who claim you are exploiting the animals by showing them in competition.
3. It is very important to be aware that some people are just being curious and friendly and actually mean no harm to you or your animals.
4. Never argue or try to defend your use of animals. This can create a scene that the person is attempting to use to get media attention. In addition, the person may try to get you to say something they can use against you or youth animal programs.
5. Always properly care for your animals (feed, water, bedding), and make sure your animals' pens or cages are kept clean. Never use excessive force while handling your animals.
6. If confronted, and you believe that you or your animal(s) are in danger, first protect yourself, then your animal(s) and equipment.
7. If your animals are well taken care of and well treated, there is no reason to be intimidated by animal activists. Stay calm and seek help from an adult volunteer or superintendent.
8. Use your common sense and be professional and polite at all times.





# Animal Care and Welfare Guide

## General Animal Care Guidelines and Checklist

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The exhibition environment provides temporary housing and provisions for a variety of animals. Under these conditions, animals should be carefully managed, monitored and maintained to optimize care during the fair or show. Before moving animals into the housing environment, it is recommended that exhibitors inspect the pen, stall or tie-up area to be sure it is clean and free of objects, protrusions or obstacles that may cause injury. If animals are group housed, consideration should be given to stocking the pen so that all animals may rest comfortably at the same time. Feed and water must be provisioned and readily accessible to all animals. Animal specific recommendations are available at:

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/MDA\\_Care\\_Farm\\_Animals\\_GAAMP\\_129713\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/MDA_Care_Farm_Animals_GAAMP_129713_7.pdf)

This checklist includes the basic care guidelines that should be followed at the fair. If used on a daily basis, this checklist can assist you in providing proper oversight and care of your animal(s).

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean, fresh water is available for all animals   | <input type="checkbox"/> Animal show preparation includes no practices that cause undue distress                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manure and waste is promptly disposed of  | <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate animal washing, preparation and showing areas are provided                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing area is free of objects and obstacles that could cause injury                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Feed is provided and appropriate to animal type and function                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Each animal is housed with adequate space to rest                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> A veterinarian is on call or on the premises to respond to animal health issues or emergencies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved treatment withdrawals are followed   | <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate ventilation and protection from severe weather is provided for all animals            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safe, clean transportation is provided  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate, clean bedding is provided for each animal based on current thermal conditions |   |

The available animal project resource materials may also provide additional guidance for animal care. The attention given to animal care during the fair or show can make a significant contribution to how an animal reacts and adapts to the fair or show environment. Responsible and professional behavior towards animals, other exhibitors and the public will make the fair or show experience a positive one.

(This checklist was adapted from the Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Service.)