



July 5, 2011

Dear OAAS Member,

4-H Ontario received your mailing information through The Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies.

4-H Ontario sincerely thanks all Agricultural Societies for their long-standing support of 4-H Ontario and local Club activities. It is through the partnership with OAAS that many 4-H Clubs are able to hold their Achievement Programs, many of which are Livestock Clubs. All Ag Societies know the importance of animal health and safety, and 4-H Ontario feels it is important to share the release of the Fact Sheet: *4-H Ontario Livestock Project - Animal Health and Safety Guideline*. 4-H Ontario wants to ensure all OAAS Members are aware of 4-H Ontario's best practices on the issue of animal health, and disease prevention, both at home and on the fair grounds. This information is very timely as it coincides with livestock club activities in preparation of shows, and Achievement Programs.

It outlines 4-H Ontario's expectations and supportive measures for Volunteers and Members when bringing animals to shows. Livestock health is important to everyone in the industry, especially livestock show organizers and disease prevention is key to ensuring 4-H project animals stay healthy throughout the 4-H year. This educational Fact Sheet for 4-H Volunteers and Members highlights the important of ensuring animals and people are always safe and healthy. Veterinarians, industry stakeholders and 4-H Ontario staff and Volunteers shared jointly in the creation of this Fact Sheet. These collaborations have also produced additional educational efforts, such as a PowerPoint Presentation created by the Ontario Association of Bovine Practitioners for veterinarians to access off their website and use when educating 4-H Members on animal safety.

"Having been a 4-H member for 11 years, learning how to keep my 4-H calf healthy and how to prevent disease and illness from spreading has been a vital part of showing my 4-H calves. Being able to recognize sick animals and make smart decisions regarding treatment has also been important during my 4-H years and showing years. What I have learned about animal health and safety, through 4-H, will help me in the future in my career as well." - Jessica Burgess - Bruce 4-H Association Alumni

"It is a huge step forward for 4-H to provide a factsheet to educate all those involved with livestock. This is everyone's issue and everyone needs to be part of the solution in order to have healthy livestock at the shows." - John den Haan - South Simcoe 4-H Association Volunteer and Alumni

"As an animal caretaker it is essential that 4-H members, parents and animal owners ensure that their livestock projects are healthy, both at the farm or stable and at the fair. Educating members, leaders, parents and animal owners to recognize the signs of illness and employ best practices to prevent illness and disease transmission will reflect positively on the 4-H club, 4-H Ontario and the entire livestock industry."
- Heather Hargrave - Program Coordinator, Ontario Farm Animal Council

A healthy image of 4-H and the agricultural industry is important to both 4-H Ontario and the OAAS. The enclosed factsheet will help both organizations ensure a positive experience for all those involved in shows and fairs.

Please share this factsheet and promote its contents whenever possible. If you have any questions about the *4-H Ontario Livestock Project - Animal Health and Safety Guideline Fact Sheet*, please contact me at 1-877-410-6748 x. 471 or ed@4-hontario.ca

Wraychel Horne
4-H Ontario Executive Director

Fact Sheets

Section:	Document Number:
4-H Ontario Livestock Project	5.7.1
Subject: Animal Health and Safety Guideline	



Introduction

Disease prevention and control are keys to ensuring a 4-H project animal stays healthy throughout the 4-H year. There are many steps 4-H Members can take to help prevent a 4-H project animal from becoming ill. This includes steps to reduce the risks of contracting an infectious / contagious disease and having the 4-H project animal become ill. Infectious / contagious diseases are a threat to every livestock operation, and in some cases are risks to people. Prevention is absolutely necessary whenever possible. *4-H Ontario Livestock Policy O-L-09 outlines that all club leaders are encouraged to review the following information to ensure animal health and safety.*

Health Management Best Practices for 4-H Project Animals

- Should be housed individually or in a small group
- Housed in a clean, well ventilated environment
- Ideally kept separate from other livestock on the property
- Feed a healthy balanced diet
- Provide an ample source of clean, fresh water
- Have a vaccination and parasitic control protocol for the farm
- Keep an immunization record for the specific project animal
- Routinely observed for signs of disease and parasites
- Take appropriate medical steps to correct problems early before they become significant
- Keeping project animals healthy and strong will help it to fight off possible infections and disease, while allowing it to reach its full growth potential

Potential Signs of Illness

- Reduced feed and/or water intake
- 'Dull' appearance (i.e. droopy ears, hanging head, lethargic, reduced activity level)
- Breathing heavily, coughing, sneezing, runny nose
- Excessive scratching or rubbing and/or a poor hair coat
- Loss of body condition and/or body weight
- Failure to gain weight and grow

Your Responsibilities

- If the project animal becomes sick or infected and is not responding to treatment one week before a show, contact the 4-H Club Leader to ensure other arrangements can be made
- Leaders are encouraged to have plans in place to assist Members in completing their project if their animal becomes ill and cannot be shown
- Consult professionals for assistance addressing health concerns you are unfamiliar with or when animals are not responding appropriately to treatments applied

**ATTENTION: DO NOT TAKE SICK OR INFECTED ANIMALS TO A SHOW!
DO NOT MAKE YOUR MISFORTUNE ANOTHER PERSONS PROBLEM!**

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Show Best Practices

Help prevent disease transmission by:

- Using only your own clean bucket and pails for water and feed
- Using water directly from a tap/hose and not from a trough
- Clean and disinfect your equipment before and after the show
- Provide a clean method of transportation (i.e. trailer, cage)
- Avoid contact with other animals at the show that appear ill to you
- Notify a 4-H Club Leader or person in charge about any animal health concerns
- Wash or clean your project animal after attending a show
- Return project animal to a housing area separate from other livestock for several days if possible

Why should I care?

- Presenting a positive image at all times of yourself and your project animal
- You are representing your 4-H Club, Association, Community, and Province
- Public image of Agriculture to the general public attending shows
- Care and concern of the project animal itself
- Respect of, and for, your fellow show persons and animals
- Disease awareness can help prevent a small problem from becoming a larger problem!

Get started on the right foot!

It is strongly recommended that early in the 4-H year, Livestock Clubs have a Veterinarian attend a meeting to provide education on animal health including what signs and symptoms Members should be aware of. This meeting should include 4-H Members, 4-H Club Leaders, parents and the owners of the 4-H project where possible. A healthy 4-H project animal is everyone's responsibility and right.

**Remember, prevention is the best cure!
Have a rewarding 4-H show season!**

Direct requests for more information on the Livestock Project Animal Health and Safety Guideline

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