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## Don't ignore Biosecurity Basics at fairtime

Summer can be a busy time for livestock producers and a trip to the county or state fair is usually included. Fairs can be a great opportunity to gauge the results of your breeding program or identify new traits you would like to incorporate. However, fairs and other shows can also be a biological risk.

Whether you are exhibiting an animal or just visiting, there is a potential for you to inadvertently expose your herd to a new pathogen. Maintaining some basic biosecurity principles can help protect your herd.

Here are three primary components to a good year-round biosecurity program.

### Isolation

Isolation of animals is important to keep

animals from spreading disease amongst themselves. If you are exhibiting animals at the fair, it is important to isolate those animals for at least 30 days when you return home.

Individual animals may have been exposed to a disease pathogen from another animal in the next stall or in the show ring. Keeping these animals separate from the rest of your herd will give you an opportunity to identify if the animal becomes sick and or allow the animal to clear the infection before exposing the rest of your herd.

It is critical to protect your breeding cow herd. Most of these cows should be pregnant at this time and the fetus is at risk even if the cow never gets sick. Any animal that leaves the farm and has contact with other animals or new cattle that you purchase should be kept

separate from your pregnant cow herd.

### Traffic control

Traffic control relates to limiting the potential of vehicles, people or other animals besides cattle introducing or spreading a disease on your operation.

During the fair, the biggest traffic risk to your operation is you. As you walk around the fair you have the potential to carry a disease back to your farm. Be careful where you walk and try to avoid fecal contamination on your shoes. One precaution to take is to have a different set of shoes for wearing off the farm than the ones that you would normally wear while working with your cattle.

Another good idea would be to make sure that you schedule your time so that you do not have to rush home from the fair to care for your animals. Give yourself enough time to change your clothes and wash up first.

Additionally, make sure that when you have isolated an animal that has been to the fair, don't spread pathogens from these animals to the rest of your herd. Care for the resident animals first and then the isolated animals or have someone designated to care for the show stock that does not work immediately with the cow herd until they have time to wash up and change clothes and boots.

### Sanitation

Lastly, make sure that any equipment that is used at the fair is thoroughly cleaned prior to using back on your operation. If you do have to wear the same boots at home as you wore at the fair, take time to clean and disinfect them between the fair and contact with your cattle. Avoid using equipment that can't be disinfected in between the fair and your operation or have a different set of items for use at the fair and at home.

By cleaning all your equipment, limiting trafficking of pathogens onto and around your operation, and isolating all new animals or those that have been off the operation, you can protect your cattle herd while enjoying all the benefits of the fair.

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