

Your Petting Zoo & Fair – Tips on Making It Safe for the Public

- ❑ **No food and beverages should be allowed in animal areas.**
- ❑ **Carrying toys, use of pacifiers and baby bottles, and smoking should NOT be permitted in animal areas.**
- ❑ **Supervision of Children:** For children less than 5 years old, animal contacts should be carefully supervised by an adult, to discourage hand-to-mouth contact and to ensure appropriate hand-washing when needed, including after exiting animal area.
- ❑ **Provide hand-washing stations at exit. Running water & soap is strongly recommended. See the backside of this page for recommendations for hand-washing!!**
- ❑ **Provide Transition Areas between Animal Areas and Non-Animal Areas:**

The transition areas between animal and non-animal areas should be defined as clearly as possible. **Entrance transition areas** should include signs instructing visitors not to eat, drink, or place their hands in their mouth while in the animal area. **Exit transition areas** should be clearly marked with signs instructing the public to wash their hands. Hand-washing stations should be accessible to children.
- ❑ **Cleaning:** Manure and soiled animal bedding should be removed promptly. Animal waste should be temporarily stored in appropriate labeled containers, preferably lined with plastic bags. Waste containers and tools used for waste removal (e.g., shovels, pitchforks) should be kept within designated animal areas, and restricted from public access.
- ❑ **Staff:** Staff must be present in areas of animal contact to encourage appropriate human animal interactions, to reduce risk (e.g., by promptly cleaning up wastes), and to receive reports of injuries and exposures.
- ❑ **Feeding Animals:** If feeding animals is permitted, only food sold or provided by the venue for that purpose should be allowed. Food sold for animal consumption should not be eaten by people and should not be provided in containers that can be eaten by people (e.g., ice cream cones). This policy will reduce the risk of animal bites and the likelihood of children eating food that has come into contact with animals.
- ❑ **Food Vendor Location:** Food vendors should NOT be located immediately adjacent to animal exhibits due to the natural spread of animal feces in the environment. For example, *Salmonella* can survive in the environment, even after drying.

Recommendations for Animal Care and Management

- **Animal Care:** Animals should be monitored daily by owners or caretakers for any signs of illness, and receive veterinary care if signs of illness occur. No ill animals or animals from herds with a recent history of abortion or diarrhea should be on exhibit. Animals should be housed to minimize stress & overcrowding, which can increase shedding of microorganisms.
- **Veterinary Care:** Owners should retain and use the services of a licensed veterinarian. Vaccination, preventive care, and parasite control appropriate to the species should be provided. Screening for some specific diseases should be considered, e.g., tuberculosis (elephants & some ruminants)
- **Rabies:** If feasible, animals should be housed to reduce potential exposures from wild mammals such as bats, skunks, foxes, and coyotes. Mammals should be current on rabies immunizations.
- **Dangerous Animals:** Because of their strength, unpredictability, or the pathogens they may carry, some animals are not appropriate in exhibit settings where there is a possibility of animal contact. These species include non-human primates (e.g., monkeys and apes) and carnivores (e.g., lions, tigers, ocelots, wolves/wolf-hybrids and bears). In addition, rabies reservoir species such as bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes, and coyotes should not be used. Some of the species listed above are illegal to own or exhibit without a permit from USDA and/or Colorado Division of Wildlife. Reptiles, baby chicks and ducks are at high risk of shedding *Salmonella*, and thus not appropriate for young children to pet.
- **Animal Births:** Birthing exhibits for ruminants is not encouraged due to the prevalence of Q fever in these species. If animal births occur in any animal, ensure that the public has no contact with animal birthing products. The environment must be thoroughly cleaned after each birth.
- **Drinking Water:** Back-flow prevention devices should be installed between outlets in livestock areas and water lines supplying other uses on the grounds. If the water supply is from a well, adequate distance must be maintained from possible sources of contamination such as animal holding areas, manure piles, etc. Minimize the use of outdoor hoses, and do not leave hoses on the ground. Mark those accessible to the public as “not for human consumption.”

Hand-Washing = single most important prevention step for reducing disease transmission.

How to Hand-wash

Wet hands with running water, place soap into palms, rub together to make a lather, scrub hands vigorously for 20 seconds, rinse soap off of hands, then dry hands with a disposable towel.

Turn off the faucet using a disposable towel. Young children need assistance in washing hands.

Hand-washing Facilities or Stations

Hand-washing facilities should be accessible, sufficient for the maximum anticipated attendance, and configured for use by children and adults.

Hands should always be washed after leaving animal areas and prior to eating or drinking.

Running water should be of sufficient volume and pressure to remove soil from hands.

Hand-wash stations should be conveniently located between animal and non-animal areas (exit transitional area) and in food concession areas.

Maintenance should include routine cleaning and restocking of towels and soap.

The design of the hand-wash unit should leave the hands free (not a timed faucet which must be continuously or repeatedly pushed) for hand-washing. Communal basins do not constitute adequate hand-washing facilities.

Hand-washing Agents

Liquid soap dispensed by a hand or foot pump is recommended.

When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers are effective against many common disease agents, if skin is not visibly dirty. Hand sanitizers are less effective if hands are grossly soiled.

Therefore, gross contamination and dirt should be removed to the extent possible before using hand sanitizers.

Signs

Hand-wash reminder signs must be posted at exits from animal areas.

Signs should direct visitors and animal handlers to the location of hand-wash stations.

Instructional signs should be posted at the hand-wash stations and at restroom lavatories to ensure proper hand-wash practices.

The placement of hand-wash reminder signs at food concession areas is recommended.

An example of the type of information that should be considered for a hand-washing sign is:

| Hand-washing: How and When | |
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| How: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Wet hands with running water- Place soap into palms- Rub together to make a lather- Scrub hands vigorously for 20 sec- Rinse soap off of hands- Dry hands- Use paper towel to turn off water | When: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- After going to the toilet- After exiting animal areas- Before eating- Before preparing foods |

These tips were adapted from the Compendium of Measures to Prevent Disease and Injury Associated with Animals in Public Settings, 2004, from the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians.

Questions or comments?

Please call the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Communicable Disease Epidemiology Program, at (303) 692-2628.