

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs



Department of Agricultural Resources

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www.mass.gov/agr



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Avian Influenza (HPAI) Notices:

Due to the continuing US outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in domesticated and wild birds and in dairy cattle, Animal Health Officials from all six New England States are united in advising the following for agricultural fairs, competitions, exhibitions, shows, swaps, or other in-person events that encourage the gathering or co-mingling of birds and/or cattle:

Avian species

The New England State Veterinarians strongly discourage the exhibition of domestic and wild waterfowl species and may recommend delaying or canceling domestic fowl or poultry shows. If events are held, best practices for biosecurity should be implemented. Waterfowl exhibitions are currently banned in MA through April 30, 2026, which may be extended.

Bovine species

The New England State Veterinarians strongly discourage the exhibition of any bovines, including both dairy and beef cattle, that have been present in any state at the time that state had a current outbreak of HPAI in cattle. Bovines that have been shipped from currently affected states in 2026 should not be allowed on the premises of New England fairs or shows. Moving to or from an affected state for any reason will void any New England Fair and Show Season Official Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (OCVIs) that have been issued for such cattle for the remainder of the 2026 season.

The USDA APHIS Veterinary Services Federal Order Requiring Testing for and Reporting of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Livestock issued on April 24, 2024, remains in effect. It can be found on the USDA website: www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/dairy-federal-order.pdf

General Rules for All Animals:

See M.G.L. c, 128 §2C, 129 §2

Continue to next sections for additional, specific rules for Cattle, Poultry, Goats, Camelids, Swine, Sheep, Equines, Rabbits, and Dogs and Cats.

1. All animals must be:
 - a. In proper physical condition
 - b. Properly identified
 - c. Free of visual evidence of infectious, contagious, or parasitic disease at time of arrival
 - a. Animals of any species with open or draining wounds will not be approved for entry.

2. An animal will be rejected from entry if:
 - a. There is evidence of infectious, contagious, or parasitic disease or open or draining wounds
 - b. Failure to produce the necessary documents for certification, vaccination, or testing
 - c. **THE INSPECTOR'S DECISION IS FINAL**
3. Any surgical procedure or injection of foreign substance or drug, or the application of any substance which could affect the animal's performance or alter its natural contour, confirmation, or appearance is prohibited.
 - a. Irritants, counterirritants, or similar substances that affect the animal's performance, contour, conformation, or appearance is prohibited.
 - b. Exceptions include:
 - a. External applications of substances to the hooves or horns of animals that affect appearance only are permitted.
 - b. Surgical procedures performed by a duly licensed veterinarian for the sole purpose of protecting the animal are permitted.
4. Official Identification (ID):
 - a. All livestock must have proper official, individual ID as required and approved by the USDA and accepted by the fair or show for the species such as official metal ear tags, tattoos, scrapie tags, or microchips.
 - b. Registration forms must accompany health certificates when used as part of official identification, e.g. with breed registry tattoos or microchips.
5. **Health Certificates: New England Animals Showing in New England States**
 - a. One Official Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (OCVI) may be allowed for animals of the same species to be exhibited at fairs or shows in any of the New England States when submitted with an itinerary of the dates and locations of the events at which the listed animals are expected to be shown. Only animals that are healthy at the time of shipment may be moved.
 - b. For the 2026 Show and Fair season, OCVIs being used for the full season must meet all the requirements detailed in the 2026 New England Fairs and Shows memo issued jointly by the state veterinarians of CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, and VT (attached at the end of this document). This memo may be updated at any time during the fair season in response to animal health outbreaks.
6. **Health Certificates: General Rules for All Animals**
 - a. Multiple animals of the same species may be listed on one health certificate with appropriate individual IDs and descriptions. Animals of different species may not be listed on the same official health certificate.
 - b. An itinerary of the names and locations of each New England fair or show at which the owner expects to show the listed animals and the dates when each animal is expected to be on each site must be prepared by the owner and presented to the veterinarian at the time of the OCVI is written.
 - a. A copy of this planned itinerary must be attached to the official health certificate (import and export) for it to be used for more than one fair or show.
 - b. That proposed list should be signed by the veterinarian and the owner/exhibitor and reference the relevant OCVI number(s).

- c. The name and address of the first show or fair where the listed animal will be exhibited is to be used as the “destination” on the OCVI form.
 - a. “See attached list” or similar statement directing Animal Health Official or Fair Inspectors to the attached proposed itinerary must be included.
- d. Exhibitors must keep an accurate list of the show locations and dates when their animals were present on show or fairgrounds. This record must be available to fair inspectors at each inspection and check-in.
- e. Any animal listed on an OCVI that becomes sick must remain home. If the animal is refused entry to any exhibition during 2026 for health reasons, it must have a new health certificate issued by an accredited veterinarian within 30 days of the next interstate movement.
- f. Any New England state may end their participation in this agreement and revert to the standard published requirements for livestock imports in the state at any time, in the event of foreign animal disease outbreak or changes to state legislation.

Cattle Specific Information

See M.G.L c. 129 §§2, 39 and 330 CMR 4.04(2).

Bovine species- Special Notice 2026

The New England State Veterinarians strongly discourage the exhibition of any bovines, including both dairy and beef cattle, that have been present in any state at the time that state had a current outbreak of HPAI in cattle. Bovines that have been shipped from currently affected states in 2026 should not be allowed on the premises of New England fairs or shows. Moving to or from an affected state for any reason will void any New England Fair and Show Season Official Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (OCVIs) that have been issued for such cattle for the remainder of the 2026 season.

The states currently affected by HPAI in cattle can be found on the USDA website:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-detections/hpai-confirmed-cases-livestock>

The USDA APHIS Veterinary Services Federal Order Requiring Testing for and Reporting of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Livestock issued on April 24, 2024, remains in effect. It can be found on the USDA website:

www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/dairy-federal-order.pdf

A plan for managing lactating dairy cattle (LDC), including the handling of milk collected at the exhibition facility, should be in place for all fairs and shows where LDC will be on the premises.

1. Tuberculosis (TB) and Brucellosis testing is not required for animals from [TB-Accredited and Brucellosis-Free States](#) (which can be found at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/status-eradication-programs>) and from in-state animals. If the exhibitor’s state is not TB-Accredited or Brucellosis-Free, then the exhibitor must call the Massachusetts Division of Animal Health for entry requirements (617-626-1795 or 857-348-3922). All animals must be free of the following diseases and conditions: foot rot, mange, pinkeye, ringworm, warts, cowpox, and open or draining wounds.
2. While not required, it is strongly recommended that all cattle be currently vaccinated against rabies.

3. Note: The Big E is requiring RFID official identification tags for all cattle entering The Big E Fairgrounds premises in 2026. Other fairs may add this requirement. Contact the fair office with questions.

Poultry Specific Information

See M. G. L. c. §§2, 129, and 330 CMR 5.02

Important: *Waterfowl may not be exhibited, shown, or otherwise gathered or co-mingled at in-person events in Massachusetts until April 30, 2026, unless extended by the Director of Animal Health, per MDAR Order 1-17-AHO-25.*

1. No poultry will be admitted to a fairground until it has been individually inspected.
2. All poultry must be free of visual evidence of the following diseases: infectious bronchitis, coryza, pullorum-typhoid, fowl-pox, external parasites, and laryngotracheitis.
3. Each bird must be accompanied by written proof (ID card or test report) that the breeding flock was blood-tested negative for pullorum-typhoid within one year prior to entry date.
4. Birds from quarantined states will not be permitted entry.
5. All birds over 16 weeks of age as of January 1, 2026, shall be individually leg banded with a state leg band. This includes out-of-state exhibitors.
6. No bird vaccinated for laryngotracheitis within thirty (30) days of the fair will be admitted.

Goat Specific Information

See M. G. L. c. 129 §§2, 9 CFR 79.6 and Massachusetts Emergency Order 1-AHO-06.

1. Tuberculosis (TB) and brucellosis testing is not required for animals from TB-Accredited and Brucellosis-Free States (<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/status-eradication-programs>) and in-state animals being exhibited in MA.
2. All goats and kids presented, regardless of age, must be individually listed and identified on the health certificate.
3. All goats must be free of visual evidence of the following diseases and conditions:
 - a. Foot rot, mage, pinkeye, ringworm, warts, pox, and open or draining wounds.
 - b. All goats must also be free of soremouth and scrapie exposure.
4. Based on the Federal Scrapie Eradication Program (FSEP), goats and sheep of any age or sex brought to a show or exhibition from either out of state or within state must possess a USDA official individual identification tag or registry tattoo accompanied by current registration papers consistent with the requirements of the FSEP and the Massachusetts Emergency Order 1-AHP-06. Information is available from USDA-APHIS at 508-363-2290.

Camelid Specific information

See M.G.L. c. 129 §2, M.G.I. c. 131, §23, 321 CMR 9.02.

1. Tuberculosis (TB) and Brucellosis testing is not required for animals from TB-Accredited and Brucellosis-Free States and from in-state animals. If the exhibitor's state is not TB-Accredited or Brucellosis-Free, then the exhibitor must call the Massachusetts Division of Animal Health for entry requirements (617-626-1795 or 857-348-3922).

Swine Specific Information

See M.G.L. c. 129 §14E, 330 CME 11.4(2). 9 CFR 71.19

1. All swine must be identified by an official ear tag or registration.
2. Swine must be free of visual evidence of the following diseases and conditions: erysipelas, atrophic rhinitis, mange, and open or draining wounds.
3. Exhibited swine may not have been fed raw garbage.
4. No person shall import into Massachusetts from outside the state any swine which have been pseudorabies vaccinated. M.G.L. c. 129 §14E.
5. All swine shall originate from qualified pseudorabies-free herds or herds in qualified pseudorabies-free states only.

Sheep Specific Information

See 9 CFR 79 and Massachusetts Emergency Order 1-AHO-06

1. No sheep will be allowed entry from flocks in which Scrapie has been diagnosed or in which animals are under surveillance for Scrapie during the previous 18 months. Based on the Federal Scrapie Eradication Program (FSEP), goats and sheep of any age or sex brought to show or exhibition from either out of state or within state must possess a USDA official individual identification tag or registry tattoo accompanied by current registration papers consistent with the requirements of the FSEP and the Massachusetts Emergency Order 1-AHO-06. Information is available from USDA-APHIS at 508-363-2290.
2. No sheep will be permitted entry from flocks in which soremouth has existed or in which soremouth vaccine had been administered in the previous sixty (60) days.
3. Sheep must be free from visual evidence of foot rot, soremouth, pinkeye, ringworm, and open or draining wounds.
4. While not required, it is strongly recommended that sheep be currently vaccinated against rabies.

Equine Specific Information

See M.G.L. c. 128 §§2C. 44. 330 CMR 16.05

1. All equines entering a Massachusetts (MA) fairground originating from both within or outside Massachusetts must be accompanied by a valid health certificate and have a record of negative EIA (Coggins) test within the last 12 months.
2. All equines must be free of visual evidence of the following diseases and conditions: mange, ringworm, soring, strangles, and open or draining wounds.
3. While not required, it is strongly recommended that all equines be vaccinated for rabies, tetanus, EEE and NV within one year of the fair.

Dog and Cat Specific Information

See M.G.L. c. 129 §39G

1. All dogs and cats must be free of visual evidence of the following diseases: kennel cough, distemper, hepatitis, parvo, ringworm, and mange.
2. All dogs and cats must be accompanied by a valid or current vaccination certificate for rabies.

Contact the Massachusetts Division of Animal Health at 857-348-3922 or 617-626-1795 for further information.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Accredited Veterinarians
Exhibitors and Show Inspectors

FROM: New England State Veterinarians

CT	Dr. Thamus Morgan	NH	Dr. Mark Prescott
MA	Dr. Lorraine O'Connor	RI	Dr. Scott Marshall
ME	Dr. Taryn Pearson	VT	Dr. Kaitlynn Levine

SUBJECT: **2026 New England Fairs and Shows**

DATE: March 27, 2026

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A plan for managing lactating dairy cattle (LDC), including the handling of milk collected at the exhibition facility, should be in place for all fairs and shows where LDC will be on the premises.

All species

- **Animals of all species susceptible to HPAI** are potentially subject to quarantine as ordered by the State Veterinarian if HPAI is detected on a premises where the animal is or was exhibited.
- **If HPAI is detected in cattle in any New England State**, the Agreement between the New England State Veterinarians to allow the use of a single, fair and show season OCVI for New England animals being exhibited in New England will be voided. All exhibited animals would need to be accompanied by an OCVI issued by an accredited veterinarian within 30 days of being checked in at the show premises and/or other state import requirements.
- Best biosecurity practices for all species should be implemented.

Contact the state where animals will be exhibited for the latest updated information.

2026 Fair and Show New England Health Certificates

For the 2026 Show and Fair Season, domesticated animals from New England states (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, and VT) may be exhibited at fairs and shows in New England throughout the fair and show season using a single Official Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (OCVI) that meet the requirements outlined in this memo.

General Requirements (all NE states):

- A single OCVI from the animals' home state may be completed for travel to and from the New England states in which the animals will be exhibited.
- Multiple animals of the same species may be listed on one OCVI with appropriate individual IDs and descriptions.
- Animals of different species may not be listed on the same official health certificate.
- An itinerary of the **names** and **locations** for each New England fair or show at which owner expects to show the listed animals and the **dates when each animal is expected to be on each site**, must be prepared by the owner and presented to the veterinarian at the time the OCVI is written.
 - A copy of this planned itinerary must be attached to the OCVI (import and export) for it to be used for more than one fair or show.
 - That proposed list should be **signed by the veterinarian and the owner/ exhibitor** and reference the relevant OCVI number(s).
 - Electronic OCVIs **must include this list of exhibition names, addresses, and dated in the "remarks and comments" section**
- The **first show or fair** where the listed animals will be exhibited will be the **Consignee** on the OCVI, as shown here:
 - New England Fair Season**
 - Street address of first fair or show
 - See Exhibition List

- Exhibitors must keep an accurate list of the show locations and dates when their animals were physically on show/fairgrounds. This record must be available to fair inspectors at each inspection and check-in.
- **Any animal listed on an OCVI that becomes sick must remain home.** Any animal that is **refused entry** to any exhibition during 2026 for health reasons must have a new OCVI issued by an accredited veterinarian **within 30 days** of the next fair or show where it will be exhibited.
- Any New England state may end their participation in this agreement and revert to the standard published requirements for livestock imports in the state at any time, in the event of foreign animal disease outbreak or changes to state legislation.

State-specific requirements:

- **CT**
 - Fair and Show OCVIs may be issued and used between January 1 and October 31, 2026
 - An importation permit for exhibition animals is required for cattle, camelids, goats, sheep, and swine
 - Testing and vaccinations are required for some species
 - Contact CT Dept. of Agriculture for permits and requirements at 860-713-2504 or AGR.SVCS@ct.gov
- **MA**
 - Fair and Show OCVIs may be issued and used between January 1 through October 31, 2026
 - Contact MDAR at 857-348-3922 or 617-626-1795 with questions
- **ME**
 - Fair and Show OCVIs may be issued and used between January 1 and October 31, 2026
 - An importation permit for exhibition animals is required for some species
https://www.maine.gov/dacf/ahw/animal_health/livestock_importation.shtml
 - Contact ME State Veterinarian's Office at 207-287-3701 with questions
- **RI**
 - Fair and Show OCVIs may be used between January 1 and October 31, 2026
 - Contact the RI State Veterinarian's Office at 401-537-4281 with questions
- **NH**
 - Fair and show OCVIs may be issued on or after April 1, 2026, and used for participating NH fairs and shows from July 1 through October 31, 2026
 - Contact NH State Veterinarian's Office (603) 271-2404 for permits
- **VT:**
 - Fair and show OCVIs may be issued on or after April 1, 2026, and used for participating VT fairs and shows from May 1 through October 31, 2026
 - Contact the VT Animal Health Office at 802-828-2421 for specific import requirements and permits

Sick or exposed animals may not be shipped anywhere.