Swine Influenza Key Messages - August 11, 2016 (2:46 p.m.)

Swine influenza at Michigan county fairs: BACKGROUND

- Swine influenza H3N2 has been confirmed at three Michigan fairs: Muskegon County Fair, Ingham County Fair and Cass County Fair.
- Both the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and area local health departments have been contacted and are managing the situation from the perspective of human health.
- Human infection with flu viruses from pigs are most likely to occur when people are in close proximity to infected pigs, such as in pig barns and livestock exhibits housing pigs at fairs.
- Swine influenza viruses are classified by the types and further classified by strains, like people, pigs are susceptible to many strains of flu.

Swine influenza basics

- Swine influenza is a virus which commonly circulates in the pig population.
- Swine influenza is a zoonotic disease and can occasionally be transmitted to humans.
- Soap and water are very effective in deactivating/killing the virus.
- Exhibitors and caretakers are those at highest risk and should follow proper biosecurity protocols to protect themselves and their animals.

Help keep pigs healthy

- Observe pigs closely when they arrive at the fair. Immediately move sick pigs off site or isolate them from other animals on the fairgrounds.
- Sprinkling a few drops of cool water at the base of the head or the shoulder of pigs every 15 to 20 minutes during the heat of the day will help keep them cool.
- Influenza virus incubation time is one to four days; sending pigs to processing as early as possible will reduce the likelihood of clinical illness and spread of virus from pigs to people as well as pigs to pigs.
- Monitor feed/water consumption. Pigs that are off feed or acting depressed may be becoming ill.
- Normal temperature for a pig is 101.5 – 103.5 F. If the temperature is equal to or greater than 105 degrees, notify your fair vet immediately and report to MDARD at 800-292-3939.
- Notify your fair veterinarian and your swine superintendent if pigs have a fever, nasal discharge, high respiration or heart rate or are off feed, inactive, sneezing or coughing (barking).

- Pigs with fevers should not be sent to processing, however, once fever has passed they may enter the food chain.

- In hot weather, it is important to reduce the stress on the pigs as much as possible. Keep pigs cool, hydrated and consider shortening the time pigs are at the fair.

- To decrease stress - which increases the risk of illness - consider auctioning pigs without running them through the sale ring, but instead have the seller in the ring. You may also consider moving the sale or show time to a cooler part of the day.

Help keep people healthy

- Minimize general public and exhibitor time in the barn with pigs. Consider only allowing foot traffic through one area of the barn. Minimize contact between pigs and people.

- Do not allow any food or beverages in the swine barn. Communicate the need to wash hands regularly--entering/leaving barn, after touching animals and before eating. This is important for both exhibitors and fair visitors.
  - Alcohol-based hand sanitizers and wipe stations can also be used to disinfect hands after contact with animals.

- Seek medical care if exhibitors or others develop influenza-like symptoms.

Transporting pigs to the fair

- Transportation is a stressful time for pigs during periods of heat.

- Remove feed from pigs for 12 hours before shipment (remove feed, but not water).

- Avoid moving pigs during the heat of the day, and allow more time to load pigs.

- Provide additional time when loading pigs.

- Load fewer pigs to allow maximum air movement. Open all vents and slats.

- Keep vehicles in constant motion. Do not stop during the heat of the day. Avoid rest or truck stops that other exhibitors or swine transporters are using.
Biosecurity (cleaning and disinfecting)

- Have exhibitor meeting(s) at the start of your event (see "Exhibitor meeting agenda"). Communicate the need to use proper hygiene, practice good biosecurity, how to contact the fair veterinarian and the need to be on alert for symptoms of influenza when caring for animals.

- If space allows, avoid nose-to-nose contact between pigs from different families using an open space or solid penning.

- Have an isolation area, removed from fair (public) traffic available to house and monitor sick or symptomatic animals.

- Scale(s) and sorting boards are high risk for influenza transfer between commingled pigs.
  - Disinfect scales/sorting boards frequently (between pig from different families or every six to eight pigs handled).
    - A 10 percent bleach/water mixture minimizes the spread of the disease. Use bleach in combination with a detergent (dish or laundry soap) to increase effectiveness.

- Disinfected wash areas at least once each day and make sure it has time to thoroughly dry after being disinfected.

- Consider providing a disinfection area and supplies for exhibitors to clean their equipment before it goes home.

Food safety

- You cannot get influenza from eating pork or handling pork products.

- As with all meat, pork is safe to eat when cooked properly. USDA recommends cooking pork roasts, steaks and chops to 145 degrees Fahrenheit with a three-minute rest time before carving or consuming. Ground pork patties, ground pork mixtures and organ and variety meats (such as heart, kidney, liver, tongue and chitterlings) should be cooked to 160 degrees Fahrenheit.