

Biosecurity Plan Template for Livestock Exhibitions¹

Isabell L. Revere, Colleen C. Larson, Ricky W. Telg, Benjamin D. Anderson, and Cynthia B. Sanders²

This publication provides a biosecurity plan template for livestock exhibitions. Due to the presence of large crowds in proximity to animals, these exhibitions can increase the risk of infectious disease outbreaks. This template is a framework specific to exhibitions, designed to assist exhibition organizers in creating a biosecurity plan for their event. Implementing the suggestions from this template during an exhibition will help reduce the risk of disease outbreaks.

Introduction

Livestock exhibitions are events that allow youth and adults to participate in agriculture-based activities, such as showing animals. Livestock exhibitions include livestock fairs, rodeos, shows, expos, jackpots, and other events (Biggs and Young 2025). Exhibitions can also serve as educational events, often attracting the general public. Due to the presence of large crowds in proximity to animals, these exhibitions may increase the risk of infectious disease outbreaks (Biggs and Young 2025). Despite the risks, many livestock exhibitions lack adequate biosecurity plans, likely due to the absence of biosecurity templates tailored specifically to these types of events (Biggs and Young 2025). While there are general frameworks and guidelines for on-farm biosecurity, these recommendations do not address the unique challenges of exhibitions (National Dairy FARM Program 2025). To address this gap, this publication details a biosecurity plan template for livestock exhibitions. The template is a framework specific to exhibitions, designed to assist exhibition organizers in creating a biosecurity plan for their events. A biosecurity manager, which could be an exhibition organizer, another exhibition employee, a responsible volunteer, or an Extension faculty member, should be identified to lead exhibition staff in developing and implementing a biosecurity plan (Biggs and Young 2025).

Why Is Biosecurity Important?

Biosecurity is any management practice that prevents the introduction and spread of a pathogen throughout a facility (Renault, Humblet, and Saegerman 2021). Practicing good biosecurity helps protect humans and animals from diseases. At livestock exhibitions, the risk of disease outbreaks is increased due to the intermingling of animals

from different species and locations (Grooms 2016). Additionally, visitors and exhibitors have close contact with livestock at exhibitions, increasing the risk of disease spread from animals to humans (zoonoses) (Renault, Humblet, and Saegerman 2021).

How to Use the Template

The template is developed to help exhibition organizers and their biosecurity managers evaluate and design their events with biosecurity in mind. Biosecurity managers should complete the template and answer all relevant questions. After filling out the template, biosecurity managers will have an adapted biosecurity plan for their event. The framework is designed to adapt to the needs of the event. Implementing every aspect of the template may not always be feasible or necessary. The biosecurity manager must work together with the exhibition organizer to determine which biosecurity measures are necessary and feasible for their event. Biosecurity managers and exhibition organizers should also consider their federal, state, and local guidelines.

Major Sections of the Template

The template is divided into sections based on key areas and biosecurity risks at exhibitions. Examples of necessary signage and pre-show health declaration surveys are included in the template as well. Surveys can be adapted to include pathogen-specific questions. Common survey platforms include Qualtrics, Google Forms, Microsoft Forms, and SurveyMonkey.

Template sections are listed below.

Facility Information: This section provides an overview of the livestock exhibition facility, including name, address, and dates of the event.

Important Contacts: This section lists names, phone numbers, and email addresses of on-site individuals associated with the exhibition and state emergency contacts. This creates a communication channel for exhibition staff to contact each other as well as exhibitors and state officials.

Pathogen Risks: This section provides a description of pathogens of concern that may pose risks to an exhibition. This could include current outbreaks, zoonotic diseases, or previous concerns.

Entry and Exit: This section describes the flow of vehicular, exhibitor, and visitor traffic, as well as major points of entry/exit and protocols for exhibitors and visitors.

Visitors: This section describes the number of anticipated visitors and provides guidelines for pathways and signage to help direct visitors at the exhibition.

Exhibitors: This section describes the number of exhibitors, check-in protocols, and guidelines for before, during, and after the exhibition.

Animals: This section describes the type(s) of animal(s) at the event and the way they are to be checked in and housed, as well as show ring, equipment, and post-show protocols.

Waste Management: This section describes how animal and landfill waste will be collected and managed at this event.

Emergency Response and Preparedness: This section provides emergency response contact information and a plan to report, contain, and communicate emergencies in the event of an outbreak.

All exhibition staff should understand their role in implementing the biosecurity plan, especially the emergency response protocol. Copies of the plan should be kept on-site and given to all exhibition staff.

Accessing the Template

The template is provided as a fillable PDF or as a Word document in the supplemental files, which can be accessed below:

[Biosecurity Plan Template Word Version](#)

[Biosecurity Plan Template Fillable PDF Version](#)

Sample signs are available as a supplemental file, which can be accessed below:

[Sample Signs for Biosecurity Plan](#)

An example of a pre-show health declaration survey is available as a supplemental file, which can be accessed below:

[Example Pre-show Health Declaration Survey for Biosecurity Plan](#)

Summary

The template provided will guide you through creating a strong biosecurity plan for a livestock exhibition. Implementing the suggestions from this template will help reduce the risk of disease outbreaks at the exhibition.

References

- Biggs, R. S., and C. A Young. 2025. "Practical Biosecurity for Human-Livestock Interactions at Exhibition Events and Petting Zoos." *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Food Animal Practice* 41(1): 123–135. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cvfa.2024.11.011>
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² Isabell L. Revere, graduating MPH student, Department of Environmental and Global Health, UF College of Public Health and Health Professions, Gainesville, FL; Colleen Larson, Extension agent III, M.S., regional specialized agent for agriculture, UF/IFAS Extension Okeechobee County, Okeechobee, FL; Ricky W. Telg, director, Center for Public Issues Education, and professor, Department of Agricultural Education and Communication; Benjamin D. Anderson, assistant professor, MHS program director, Department of Environmental and Global Health, UF College of Public Health and Health Professions, Gainesville, FL; Cynthia B. Sanders, associate district Extension director, and livestock Extension agent IV, UF/IFAS Extension Alachua County, Newberry, FL; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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