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For Immediate Release

OFFICIALS REMIND FAIR GOERS TO PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE

COLUMBUS (June 18, 2015) — As Ohio’s 2015 agricultural fair season kicks-off, the Ohio Departments of Health (ODH) and Agriculture (ODA) are reminding Ohioans to practice good hygiene when visiting livestock exhibits this summer.

“With fair season upon us, we want to remind folks that some illnesses, such as influenza viruses, are commonly carried by livestock and can be directly transmitted between animals and humans in the same way those illnesses are often transmitted between people,” said ODH Director Richard Hodges.

There are some simple precautions individuals should take when visiting the fairs:

- Always wash hands with soap and water before and after petting or touching any animal
- Never eat, drink, or put anything in your mouth in animal areas
- Parents and caregivers are encouraged to leave strollers outside the animal exhibits and carry small children
- Older adults, pregnant women, young children, and people with weakened immune systems should consider avoiding animal areas

“With Ohio being home to 94 county and independent agricultural fairs, we are fortunate enough to have plenty of access to some of the most fun, safe and wholesome educational activities for the whole family. These commonsense precautions we can all take will work to ensure the fairs remain that way for all Ohioans,” said ODA Director David T. Daniels.

Fair season in Ohio lasts from mid-June through October. ODA has worked closely with fair boards, youth organizations and fair veterinarians to increase access to hand sanitizers and hand washing stations. In addition, ODA will make materials available to fair organizers to post reminders about good hygiene in animal areas to help protect the health of fairgoers this year.

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