



PRECAUTIONS AROUND LIVESTOCK

Zoonoses are diseases that can be spread between animals and humans.

The simple precautions below can help minimize disease risks for you and your animals.

Hand Washing

Hand washing is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of disease.

- Wash hands often when around livestock, especially:
 - **AFTER** – direct contact with animals, manure, or equipment used in their environment
 - **BEFORE** – preparing or eating food, or having contact with infants or young children
- Use warm water and soap. Lather and scrub at least 20 seconds (sing the Happy Birthday song twice).
- Supervise children to ensure proper hand washing.
- Alcohol hand gels can be used if hands are not visibly dirty.

Avoid Entry Into Your Body

Germs that enter your body can cause disease. Protect your face and skin around livestock or animal areas.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth when you are around livestock and hands can be washed.
- Do not eat or drink in animal areas.
- Keep any cuts, scrapes, wounds, even chapped or dry skin covered when you are around livestock.
- Promptly clean any scratches or bites received when working around livestock.
 - Monitor the wound for signs of infection (e.g., redness, swelling, oozing). If seen, contact a healthcare provider.
- Wear washable boots and coveralls when working around animals, and remove before entering the home.
- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning animal areas. Wash your hands after you are finished.
- If dust is generated, such as when sweeping, wear a mask to prevent entry into your nose.

Children and Livestock

Young children are at greatest risk for illness and should always be supervised around livestock.

- Do not allow children under 5 to have contact with young calves, goats, or lambs.
- Do not let children put their hands or objects (e.g., pacifiers) into their mouths around animals or animal areas.
- Do not keep livestock or poultry inside your home.

Keep Animals Healthy

Work with your veterinarian to develop the best health program for your herd or flock.

- Keep animals up to date on vaccines and parasite control.
- Monitor animals daily for illness.
- Isolate ill animals and contact your veterinarian.
- Control dust in animal areas to avoid damage to the respiratory tract and the risk of airborne disease.

Keep Animal Areas Clean

Zoonotic disease organisms can be shed in animal feces.

- Remove manure frequently
- Ensure animals have clean, dry bedding.
- Keep feed and water fresh and containers clean.

Prevent Exposure

When Assisting Pregnant Animals

Several zoonotic diseases can be transmitted during the delivery of newborn animals.

- Wear gloves or palpation sleeves when assisting delivery.
- Wear masks to protect your face from dust or fluids.
- Remove birthing tissues and clean delivery areas promptly.

Avoid Disease Vectors

Insects, ticks and wildlife can carry disease organisms that can harm you or your livestock.

- Use an effective vector control programs for your livestock.
- Do not let livestock interact with wildlife.
- Eliminate standing water sources (e.g., old tires, barrels) to prevent breeding areas for mosquitoes.
- Protect yourself from bites from ticks and mosquitoes.
- When possible, avoid being outdoors during peak vector activity times (e.g., dusk and dawn) or wear EPA-approved insect repellants.

To learn more about zoonotic diseases and prevention measures, visit <https://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/zoonoses>.