



Petting Zoos, Swap Meets and Animal Exhibits

Guidelines for Organizers

Petting zoos, fair exhibits and swap meets are a great way to teach kids about animals. But there's another lesson kids can learn at these events – that they can get sick from animals. No one wants children to learn this lesson the hard way. Whether you organize these events yourself, or contract with someone else, set these standards to be sure the only thing kids take home is memories.

Petting Zoos

Signs

- Post large, clear signs in several places reminding visitors:
 - ⇒ *Remember to wash your hands after visiting the animals.*
 - ⇒ *No food, beverages, pacifiers, toys or smoking allowed in animal contact areas.*
 - ⇒ *Report any animal bites or injuries to the attendant.*

Layout

- Keep animals in areas clearly separated from animal-free areas, using obvious methods like double barriers.
- Set up traffic flow allowing a way to remove manure without taking it through visitor areas.
- Place food stands and picnic tables at least 100 feet from animal areas.
- Provide hand-washing stations right outside the exit from the animal contact area.

Animals

- Don't allow:
 - ⇒ Sick animals.
 - ⇒ Animals less than 2 months old.
 - ⇒ Bats, skunks, raccoons, or foxes, because they are particularly susceptible to rabies.
 - ⇒ Legally prohibited animals – turtles with shells smaller than 4 inches from head to tail, prairie dogs, giant African land snails, and Gambian rats.
 - ⇒ Dogs without current rabies vaccination. (In some communities, cats and ferrets must also be vaccinated for rabies.)

Operation

- Train your staff, and always have at least one adult attendant on duty.
- Keep food, drinks, cigarettes, toys, pacifiers – anything that could pass germs from hand to mouth – out of the animal area.
- Remove manure frequently and dispose of it properly.
- At least once a day, thoroughly clean residue from fences and railings, and then disinfect with a solution of 2½ tablespoons of household bleach per gallon of water.
- Keep the animal area locked and animals secured when the area is closed to the public.
- Provide shade from the sun and plenty of water easily accessible to animals.
- Do not serve raw milk or encourage attendees to taste animal feed.

Hand-washing Station

- You need running water, hand soap, paper towels and a waste container. Refill supplies regularly.
- Children need to be able to use the station easily.
- Assign an attendant to the station to remind children to scrub their hands, including their fingernails, while they sing "Happy Birthday" twice (20 seconds)
- Sanitizers such as hand-washing gels don't kill some pathogens and don't work well if hands are grossly soiled.

Swap Meets and Exhibits

Acceptable species

Sales and exhibits should be limited to these species:

- ⇒ Dogs
- ⇒ Cats
- ⇒ Domestic rabbits
- ⇒ Poultry
- ⇒ Domestic ducks and geese
- ⇒ Domestic turkeys younger than 6 months
- ⇒ Pheasants, quail and partridge
- ⇒ Pigeons
- ⇒ Domestic doves
- ⇒ Hamsters
- ⇒ Domestic mice and rats
- ⇒ Guinea pigs
- ⇒ Gerbils
- ⇒ Domestic sheep
- ⇒ Domestic piglets, potbelly pigs
- ⇒ Non-native pet birds (parakeets, finches, etc.)
- ⇒ Ferrets

Prohibited Species

Some animals are specifically prohibited by law:

- Turtles with shells smaller than 4 inches from head to tail, prairie dogs, giant African land snails, and Gambian rats
- Native game birds and animals
- Wild boars, Russian boars, peccaries, feral swine, other wild-type swine

Animal Health Regulations

- All animals originating outside Wisconsin need a certificate of veterinary inspection. Vendors need proof that their animals meet all animal health regulations.
- **Dogs** over 5 months and **cats** from outside Wisconsin need proof of rabies vaccination.
- All **poultry** and **game birds** over 4 months old or that are sexually mature need proof of a negative test for pullorum-typhoid in the past 90 days, or of origination from a U.S. pullorum-typhoid clean flock.

If you have any questions,
please call 608-224-4872,
Monday-Friday,
7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.