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ANIMAL HEALTH ADVISORY **FAQs to Clarify Poultry Commingling Ban** (28 May 2015)

Since the members of the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) approved a prohibition on the movement of any birds to public shows, sales and other events that allows commingling of birds, the agency has been fielding calls for clarification. The following are the most frequently asked.

Q: Can eggs be shown at county/state fairs?

A: Yes. Eggs may be shown at the fair. They should be presented clean, free of all fecal matter.

Q: Are egg hatching/incubator activities allowed at the county/state fairs and/or in classrooms? Can hatched chicks be sent home with 4-Hers/students or others?

A: Yes. Eggs should be clean and free of all fecal material. Chicks may be sent home with individuals. This activity is not viewed as risky. Infected eggs will not hatch, so that will not result in infected chicks. Further, the use of heat lamps/incubator will provide enough heat to kill virus particles that could be present.

Q: Can a bird or birds from a single source be brought to the fair for use in showmanship/Round Robin/poultry knowledge competitions?

A: Yes, if the birds used meet all of the following criteria:

1. All birds present come from a single source, i.e., the same flock; no mixing. Birds must return to the original site or go to slaughter at the end of the event.
2. Water fowl (geese, swans, ducks, etc.) should not be used.
3. All birds in the flock-of-origin must be healthy and show no signs of disease.
4. Only one set of single-sourced birds are present during the duration of the entire exhibition/event (ie, birds from flock #1 on day 1 may not be replaced with birds from flock #2 on another day of the fair).
5. The Poultry Superintendant must provide BOAH, in writing, with the following information if birds are used: Fair location, name, address and phone number for the bird(s) owner and what date(s) the bird(s) will be at the event. Email info to: animalhealth@boah.in.gov

Q: Would birds from various sources be allowed if the show is terminal, such as a broiler show?

A: No. Commingling events are not allowed; the terminal status is not germane to this situation.

Q: Can birds be purchased at local farm supply store?

A: Yes. As long as the seller is offering birds that come from a flock that participates in the National Poultry Improvement Program (NPIP).

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Q: Does this prohibition change the importation requirements on birds coming from other states? What about mail order birds?

A: Long-standing importation requirements have not changed with this prohibition. Indiana's avian entry requirements are online at: <http://www.in.gov/boah/2391.htm>

Q: Does this prohibition apply to certain bird species and not others, or some counties and not others?

A: This prohibition applies to all bird species, not just domestic poultry, in all Indiana counties. This includes exotics and specialty species.

Q: If a county provides birds to all 4-Hers from a single source (broilers), would they be allowed to show those birds at the county fair?

A: No. Once the birds are taken to 4-Hers' homes, they are no longer coming from a single-source location. The fair would be a commingling event.

Q: Do 4-Hers and others who own poultry present a biosecurity risk if they attend an event that features single-sourced birds?

A: Biosecurity is always an issue at every type of show, for every species. As a good practice, all poultry owners should be sure their shoes and clothing are free of manure/droppings before entering a site where other birds are present. This includes before returning home and having contact with their own birds. 4-Hers handling poultry should wash their hands thoroughly after contact.

Q: Is BOAH or 4-H going to provide information to the public about the absence of birds?

A: Yes. BOAH is working with the Indiana State Poultry Association and Purdue Extension to develop materials that explain why birds are absent from shows and remind the public about the safety of the food supply.

Q: How can Hoosiers comment on this rule?

A: BOAH is providing a virtual public hearing online at: <http://www.in.gov/boah/2717.htm> to give Hoosiers an opportunity to comment on the rule and propose ways the rule can be modified to restore these show and sale events in a safer, healthier way for the birds.

More information on highly pathogenic avian influenza and the current situation in Indiana is available online at: <http://www.in.gov/boah/2390.htm>. Users may subscribe to email updates on that page.

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