

Sample Swine Influenza Buyer Letter

July 2, 2018

Dear Spartan County Fair hog buyer:

Thank you again for recent purchase at the 4-H Market Livestock Auction. We greatly appreciate your support of the Spartan County Fair and our local 4-H youth.

As indicated at the sale, a few of the 4-H fair pigs fell ill last week. On Wednesday, July 1, the Michigan State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory confirmed that several hogs tested positive for a variant of swine influenza. Samples have been sent to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa for final confirmation and typing.

As a buyer at the sale, we wanted to make you aware of this situation and assure you that swine influenza in pigs is not a food safety concern. You cannot get influenza by handling pork products or eating cooked pork or cooked pork products. As with all meat, pork is safe to eat when cooked properly. The USDA recommends cooking pork roasts, steaks and chops to 145 degrees Fahrenheit with a three-minute rest time before carving or consuming. Ground pork patties, ground pork mixtures and organ and variety meats (such as heart, kidney, liver, tongue and chitterlings) should be cooked to 160 degrees Fahrenheit.

We have been working in close consultation with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development throughout this situation. All proper procedures for shipping and processing of the livestock have/will be followed. Any pigs with a fever will not be shipped until fevers are no longer present.

Swine influenza is a zoonotic disease, which means it can be transmitted to humans. Because of this, it is out of an abundance of caution that we encourage anyone who attended the fair to monitor their own health for the next few days. Potential symptoms include:

- A fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit, or higher; or feeling feverish
- A cough and/or sore throat
- A runny or stuffy nose
- Headaches and/or body aches
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea (most common in children)

If you exhibit these symptoms, please visit your doctor and let them know that you attended the Spartan County Fair. In addition, if you or anyone in your family has been or becomes sick or symptomatic, please contact the SCHD during business hours at 517-222-0000 or after-hours at 517-222-1111.

Furthermore, we ask that you cooperate with the Spartan County Health Department (SCHD) and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) as they gather information on any potential human illness and/or contact with swine at the Spartan County Fair.

Again, we thank you for your recent purchase and remind you that swine influenza in pigs is not a food safety concern. You cannot get influenza by eating cooked pork or pork products.

Thank you for your continued support of 4-H.

Sincerely,