

# Petting Zoo, Animal Attraction and Farm Visits - Information for Operators

## **SIGNAGE**

Ensure that signs are posted to remind visitors to:

- wash hands after touching animals and before eating
- have parents/adults supervise the children's hand washing
- avoid touching their faces and mouths
- not bring food into the animal area



Signs need to be placed in appropriate locations such as entrances, exits and eating locations.

## **HAND WASH STATIONS**

At least one hand wash sink must be available with hot / warm water, soap and paper towels. Larger events will need to provide more hand wash sinks. The sink(s) should be clearly visible in the immediate area of the zoo premise. If permanent sinks are not available or not located near the animal area, temporary sinks must be set up to facilitate hand washing.

To determine the number of hand wash stations needed, estimate the number of visitors per hour at the busiest time. For example if 30 people leave the animal area in 15 minutes and it takes one minute to wash and dry hands, 2 hand wash stations would be needed (30 people x 1 minute divided by 15 = 2).

Hand wash stations need to be stocked with soap and paper towels and maintained throughout the open hours.

## **ANIMALS**

Animals should have a friendly disposition, be in good health, have the appropriate vaccinations and be regularly monitored by a veterinarian. Animals must be comfortable with extensive petting or handling. Vaccination records must be readily available if requested by Alberta Health Services. There must not be any carnivorous or dangerous animals, or animals restricted by Alberta or Canadian legislation in the petting area.

All animals can be potential sources of disease. Monitor animals daily for signs of illness. Animals with diarrhea should not be exhibited.

## **GARBAGE AND WASTE**

Promptly remove manure and soiled animal bedding from the animal area. Store animal waste and removal tools in an area that is not accessible to the public.

Ensure that adequate garbage cans are available for public use. Liquid waste must be either discharged to a sanitary sewer or stored in an enclosed wastewater holding tank. Liquid waste holding tanks and garbage cans must be emptied as often as needed.

## **DEMONSTRATIONS**

Unpasteurized products (such as milk, cheese and juice) **cannot be served** to the public. Ensure that visitors wash their hands after being involved with hands-on demonstrations.

## **USER SAFETY**

Where attractions require safety equipment for users (such as helmets), the operator must ensure that the equipment is maintained in good condition. Equipment must be in a clean and sanitary condition before each use. This may require using a sanitizer such as chlorine to remove harmful bacteria. Equipment that has been contaminated with manure should first be cleaned and then sanitized with a bleach solution consisting of 9 parts water and 1 part bleach.

## **SITE LAYOUT**

The petting zoo, animal attraction or farm should be set up in such a way that minimizes the risks associated with animal contact. There should be clearly designated animal areas, non-animal areas and transition areas. The facility design should help minimize risks associated with direct contact with manure and encourage hand washing. Considerations must also be made for animals that are part of the attraction but may not be on display for reasons such as illness. The site should be situated in a location so that run-off from animal waste does not contaminate water pathways or groundwater. The location must be appropriate and not cause a nuisance to the neighboring attractions.

## **NON-ANIMAL AREAS**

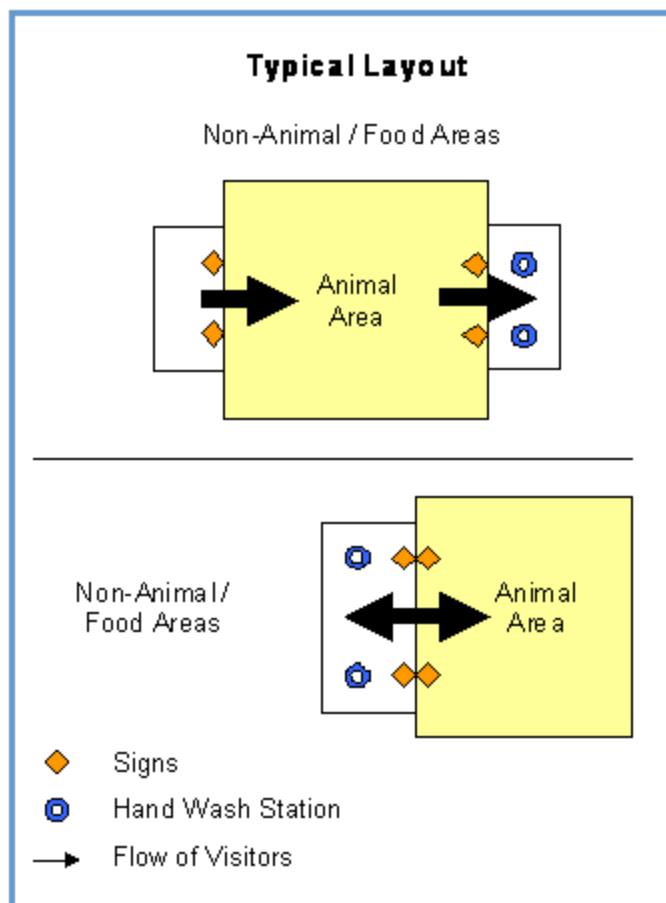
Do not permit animals, except service animals, in non-animal areas. Prepare, serve, and consume food and beverages only in non-animal areas. Provide hand washing stations and

display hand washing signs where food and beverages are served.

Tailor the recommendations in this document to your specific event and setting. Contact with animals should occur in a setting that protects the public, staff and animals from injury and disease transmission. Common problems include:

- inadequate barriers
- floor surfaces that are difficult to maintain
- insufficient plumbing
- lack of signs regarding risk and prevention measures
- inadequate hand washing facilities.

All Incidents or problems should be responded to, documented and reported.



**Acknowledgments:** Center for Disease Control and Prevention – MMWR  
Alberta Health Services - Chinook, Capital and Calgary documents  
BC Centre for Disease Control

**For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health office.**

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Grande Prairie Main Office  
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