

IF A DEMONSTRATION OR ANIMAL ACTIVIST ACTIVITY HAPPENS AT AN EVENT



Not everyone you meet at a fair or exhibition may agree with your view of animals. Some people do not use animals for food, clothing, research, or even companionship.

WHAT YOUTH EXHIBITORS CAN DO

1

If your animals are well taken care of and well treated, there is no reason to be intimidated by animal activists. Stay calm and seek help from an adult volunteer or superintendent.

2

Always properly care for your animals. Make sure they have adequate feed, water and bedding, and make sure your animals' pens or cages are kept clean. Use safe and correct handling methods, never excessive force, while working your animals.

3

It is very important to be aware that most people are just being curious and friendly and mean no harm to you or your animals.

4

If approached by a person asking questions about the management practices used to raise your animal, for example, what you are doing and why you are doing it, and if you feel uncomfortable, excuse yourself and walk away. Tell the person to direct specific questions to the designated spokesperson or superintendent.

5

Tell your fair superintendent, spokesperson, parent or leader of any interaction with persons you think are animal activists. This could include people who accuse you of being cruel to your animals because they are to be used for food or those who claim you are exploiting the animals by showing them in competition.



6

Never argue or try to defend your use of animals. This can create a scene that the person is attempting to use to get media attention. In addition, the person may try to get you to say something he or she can use against you or youth animal programs.

7

Use your common sense and be professional and polite at all times.



COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

As an exhibitor, you may be asked questions. These responses may help you prepare, and you should discuss other questions with your leader.

Why do you dock tails, clip teeth, castrate, and trim beaks?

- Practices such as these protect the animals from each other, prevent disease and help us produce safe and nutritious food.
- When we preform these tasks, we make sure to use proper techniques and equipment, and only experienced or properly trained personnel perform them.

Why are some farm animals raised indoors?

- Sows in stalls and hens in cages receive individual care and are protected from the weather and wild animals.
- Raising farm animals indoors allows us to provide a safe, clean environment for producing high-quality food products and minimizing environmental risks.

Why are antibiotics used on farms?

- It is important to keep animals healthy to produce wholesome, high-quality food products.
- Our veterinarian has a created a solid health program that addresses prevention and treatment of disease for our animals.



Why do you use show sticks, halters, etc.?

- They enable us to move animals more safely.
- Equipment is used only as a communication tool and requires lengthy preparation and training.

Be prepared to tell YOUR 4-H story.

- Why did you choose an animal or livestock project?
- What are you learning?
- How do you see yourself using this information in the future?

Questions can be directed to:

Missouri 4-H

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