



## Intrastate Movement Testing of Lactating Dairy Cows Frequently Asked Questions

*Updated May 15, 2025*

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) created this document, and will continue to update it, in order to provide answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding the [state order](#). The [state order](#) requires negative tests prior to lactating dairy cattle movements to Wisconsin fairs or exhibitions. For more information about the [federal order](#) affecting the interstate (crossing state lines) movement of lactating cattle, review the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) [website](#).

### Learn more about HPAI

DATCP has more [information and resources](#) available at [datcp.wi.gov](http://datcp.wi.gov).

If you have additional questions, contact [DATCPmediainquiries@wi.gov](mailto:DATCPmediainquiries@wi.gov) or [sign up to receive email updates](#) for “HPAI (H5N1) Updates Related to Cattle.”

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### Have there been any detections in cattle in Wisconsin?

As of the updated date of this document, there have been no detections of HPAI (H5N1) in cattle in Wisconsin. Although there have been poultry flocks affected by HPAI in Wisconsin since 2022, none have been detected with the B3.13 [genotype](#) that has been detected in dairy herds in [other states](#). A positive (sometimes called non-negative) result in cattle in Wisconsin would be reported by DATCP at the county level.

### When did the state order go into effect?

The state order is effective beginning June 19, 2024.

### What type of events does the order apply to?

Wis. Admin. Code [ATCP 10.01\(37\)](#) defines exhibition as an organized fair, swap meet, rodeo, trail ride, show, or other organized event at which animals owned by different persons are brought together from different premises and exhibited on the same premises. Exhibition does not include an animal market, an exhibition operated by an institution accredited by the associations of zoos and aquariums, or a wild animal exhibition operated pursuant to a permit from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

**Why was this requirement added?**

HPAI is a threat to human and animal health, trade, and the economy worldwide. As case counts in midwestern states have increased, the DATCP Division of Animal Health recommended additional restrictions to limit the potential for spread of HPAI at fairs and exhibitions. As with other diseases, cattle could contract the virus and not yet be showing outward signs of illness. Non-terminal events provide increased opportunities for disease to disseminate to multiple farms. While this effort seeks to limit the spread of this disease, further prevention efforts are advised as there is risk of disease transmission anytime animals are commingled.

**What animals must be tested prior to movement to Wisconsin fairs or exhibitions?**

All lactating dairy cattle are required to receive a negative test for Influenza A virus prior to intrastate or interstate movement to fairs or exhibitions. This requirement does not apply to lactating beef cattle or nonlactating dairy cattle. DATCP continues to monitor the situation nationally and will provide updates as new information becomes available. [Sign up to receive email updates](#) about HPAI (H5N1) Updates Related to Cattle on the DATCP website.

**Does the state order apply to dairy cattle moving from other countries to Wisconsin fairs and exhibitions?**

Yes, lactating dairy cattle attending Wisconsin fairs or exhibitions are included in the state order and are required to have a negative test for Influenza A virus prior to movement.

**My state is testing bulk tank milk, does that count as a test for movement?**

No, Wisconsin is not accepting bulk tank milk results or state status for movement to fairs and exhibitions.

**Who can collect samples?**

The sample must be collected by, or under the supervision of, a licensed and accredited veterinarian. This is a regulatory test; this requirement is consistent with DATCP program requirements and the USDA Federal Order.

Supervision means the oversight of the collection of the samples by:

- a) Ensuring the individual that is collecting the sample is appropriately trained to collect the milk samples and package the sample *prior to submitting to the supervising veterinarian*.
- b) Ensuring that an appropriate sample is collected, that the sample is obtained from the animal required to be tested, and that the official identification of the animal is accurately recorded on the sample submission.
- c) Being available for consultation to the individual that is collecting the samples.

Supervision does not require the veterinarian to be on the premises during sample collection.

**Must every animal that is attending a show or exhibition receive a negative test result for Influenza A?**

Each individual animal that is travelling to a fair or exhibition must be tested and receive a negative result prior to movement.

### Can a negative test result be used for movement to more than one show or exhibition?

Sample collection and testing must take place no more than seven days prior to movement to the fair or exhibition. If the animal is moving to more than one event within seven days, the initial test could be used for both events. If the movement to the second event is more than 7 days from sample collection, a second test would be needed. DATCP does not recommend testing animals at fairs or exhibitions. If further tests are required, they should be conducted at a home location or host farm. Animals with a pending test are not eligible for movement until results are known. The day of sample collection is considered “day zero.”

Example:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9/21	9/22 Day 0  <b>Sample collection</b>	9/23 Day 1	9/24 Day 2  <b>Negative results received</b>	9/25 Day 3	9/26 Day 4	9/27 Day 5
	✗ no movement	✗ no movement	✓ movement eligible	✓ movement eligible	✓ movement eligible	✓ movement eligible
9/28 Day 6  ✓ movement eligible	9/29 Day 7  ✓ movement eligible	9/30  ✗ no interstate movement*	10/1  ✗ no interstate movement*	10/2  ✗ no interstate movement*	10/3  ✗ no interstate movement*	10/4  ✗ no interstate movement*

\*Unless returning to origin farm without a change in ownership

The USDA has [recommended](#) limiting non-essential movements of cattle since March 2024. DATCP encourages cattle owners choosing to participate in fairs and exhibitions, especially those moving between events, to discuss their biosecurity plans with their herd veterinarian. While this effort seeks to limit the spread of this disease, further prevention efforts are advised as there is risk of disease transmission anytime animals are commingled.

### Is a negative test result required to return home from longer fairs and exhibitions?

The order requires that samples must be collected no more than seven days prior to movement to the fair or exhibition but lactating dairy cattle may return home after the event without the need for additional testing as long as the event does not exceed 10 days in length.

For interstate movement to longer events, refer to the [USDA FAQ](#).

**What is the turn-around time for testing?**

The state order requires that lactating dairy cattle receive a negative test for Influenza A virus at an approved National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) laboratory using an NAHLN approved assay prior to movement to a fair or exhibition. The Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Lab (WVDL) is a NAHLN laboratory that conducts this testing. WVDL advises planning for a 72-hour turn-around. WVDL has also provided they will be running tests as usual, on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, the week of July 4. Submission instructions for veterinarians are on their [website](#), or they can be reached by phone at 800-608-8387 or (608) 262-5432. WVDL is based in Madison with a satellite location in Barron; however, the Barron lab does not run this test.

**Where can I find more information about the testing conducted at NAHLN laboratories?**

The USDA has issued [guidance for laboratories](#), NAHLN laboratories will conduct NAHLN-approved PCR testing: FluA matrix, H5 and optionally 2.3.4.4b. Laboratories may pool milk samples from up to 5 cows together, this must be done in the laboratory. If a pooled sample is non-negative, individual samples would be tested to determine which submission was non-negative. Non-negative results from NAHLN laboratories are confirmed at the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL).

The PCR (polymerase chain reaction) method tests for the presence of virus. False positives are very rare with this type of testing, but confirmatory testing is conducted both at the NAHLN laboratory and then at NVSL, including virus isolation from the sample provided.

**Is there a cost for the testing?**

USDA APHIS covers the costs of pre-movement Influenza A testing of cattle at NAHLN laboratories. Veterinarians will not be charged for the test. Producers can apply for reimbursement of veterinary fees for sample collection and shipping through a premises support agreement. Veterinarians are not eligible to apply for reimbursement. For more information access USDA's [Support for Producers document](#) and the USDA and HHS [announcement](#) on support for producers.

**Who is responsible for verifying the appropriate testing has occurred?**

Event organizers are expected to review and verify negative test results for all lactating dairy cow entrants/exhibitors. Per [ATCP 10.87\(1\)\(b\)](#), the records of test results for attendees should be kept with other required records for exhibitors.

**Where can I find more information on the order requiring testing of Wisconsin lactating cattle being moved to Wisconsin fairs and exhibitions?**

DATCP has published the [order](#) as well as a [press release](#) with information. DATCP also regularly updates the [HPAI \(H5N1\) in Dairy Cattle webpage](#).

**Are cows for Miracle of Birth exhibits, or other “close-up” cows due to freshen, required to be tested prior to exhibition?**

There is no requirement in the state order for testing dry cows or close-up cows. Individual fairs could require Influenza A testing for dry cattle, or other classes of cattle not defined as lactating, if they choose. USDA has [recommended](#) limiting non-essential movements of cattle since March 2024. DATCP encourages cattle owners choosing to participate in fairs and exhibitions, especially vulnerable populations like close-up cows and calves, to discuss their biosecurity plans with their veterinarian. While this effort seeks to limit the spread of this disease, further prevention efforts are advised as there is risk of disease transmission anytime animals are commingled.

### **Is premises identification (ID) required for the testing?**

Premises ID is required for the testing required in the order. Premises ID is printed on the Milk Producer License. It can be found in the middle of the license titled “Livestock Premises Code.” The Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium (WLIC) can be contacted for help with your Premises ID at 888-808-1910. Premises registration is [mandatory for livestock premises](#) in Wisconsin.

### **Is official (ID) required for the testing?**

Official ID is required for Influenza A virus testing in cattle. Section [ATCP 10.21\(1\)\(a\)2.](#), Wis. Admin. Code, requires that a veterinarian who tests a bovine animal for any disease listed under s. [ATCP 10.03](#) shall insert, in the ear of the animal, an official ear tag unless the animal is already identified with an official ear tag and shall record, on the applicable document, the number of the official individual identification. Section [ATCP 10.03](#) lists ch. ATCP 10 Appendix A, which lists [Avian influenza](#).

### **What is official identification (ID) for cattle?**

Official ID includes National Uniform Ear tagging System (NUES) tags and 840 tags. NUES tags are silver and orange metal tags that conform to the NUES and consist of a two-digit state code followed by three letters and four numbers (for example: 35ABC1234). This includes the orange brucellosis vaccination tag.

840 tags are either visual only or Radiofrequency Identification (RFID) tags that consist of 15 digits with the first three being 840. For cattle tagged *prior to* March 11, 2015, American ID and manufacturer-coded tags are also acceptable. American ID is an 8- to 12-digit number preceded by the letters “USA.” Manufacturer-coded tags consist of 15 digits with the first three being a “900” series number.

### **Is a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) with recorded negative Influenza A results required for intrastate movement of lactating dairy cattle to fairs and exhibitions?**

Unless a CVI is required for the movement for other reasons or by event organizers, a CVI is not required to record the results of the Influenza A test. A record of the test result is sufficient.

### **Why does this order apply specifically to lactating dairy cattle?**

The [Federal Order](#) defines “lactating dairy cow” as a cow that is producing milk, regardless of the volume. The definition of “lactating dairy cow” does not include calves, pregnant heifers, or

dairy cows that are in the dry phase of their lactation cycle. Based on this definition, a negative test for Influenza A would not be required for cows participating in the dry cow class under the federal order or the state order.

The decision to limit testing was based on the high levels of virus detected in the milk of affected cows and the risk that milk from infected cows could contribute to spread of the virus. Individual fairs could require Influenza A testing for dry cattle, or other classes of cattle not defined as lactating, if they choose.

DATCP continues to monitor the evolving situation nationally and will provide updates as new information becomes available. DATCP encourages cattle owners choosing to participate in fairs and exhibitions to discuss their biosecurity plans with their herd veterinarian.

### **Are there recommendations for milking cattle at events?**

USDA provided [recommendations](#) to minimize influenza transmission at livestock exhibitions. Those recommendations included requiring that milk collected during an event be treated and disposed of according to state and local regulations, minimizing shared equipment, and frequent disinfection of common areas and equipment. 'Milk-A-Cow' exhibits are not recommended at this time.

### **How are test results reported?**

Test results from WVDL are sent to the veterinarian that submitted samples. The veterinarian provides the test result to the animal owner or exhibitor. DATCP does not receive and cannot provide or look up negative results. WVDL does notify DATCP of any positive results for [reportable diseases](#), which would include a positive HPAI (H5N1) result from a lactating dairy cow.

### **What happens if a test is positive?**

If samples are positive (sometimes referred to as non-negative) for influenza, the DATCP Division of Animal Health will contact the producer to quarantine the cattle and begin a disease investigation. Initial questions in the disease investigation will involve review of affected farm's biosecurity practices and movement records. Based on these findings, allowances for essential movements may be approved under permit. Samples are forwarded to the USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) for official confirmation, which is necessary for the owner to apply for any federal financial reimbursement. Positive results are reported out at the county level. Additional testing and demonstrating an absence of clinical signs and production changes (such as unexplained drop in milk production) associated with HPAI in the cattle will be required prior to quarantine release. DATCP has put together some information on '[What to Expect if HPAI is Confirmed on Your Dairy Farm](#)'. This information is subject to change.

### **What if I think my animal may have been exposed to a herd affected with HPAI?**

If your cattle may have been exposed to affected cattle or poultry or are showing signs of illness, contact your herd veterinarian. Cattle may be asymptomatic (not showing outward signs of

illness) or show symptoms like decreased appetite, respiratory signs, drop in milk production, changes in milk consistency, abnormal manure, fever, dehydration, or lethargy.

Additionally, under [ATCP 10.08](#) no person may, in connection with the exhibition of any animal, knowingly permit an animal that has been exposed to a contagious or infectious disease to commingle with other animals under conditions that may cause the disease to spread to an animal owned by another person. Animals that have been exposed to sick animals should not travel for any reason.

**Will other animal movement restrictions be enacted if there are more cases?**

DATCP continues to monitor the situation nationally and will provide updates as new information becomes available. This order went into effect following an increase of cases nationally and newly affected Midwestern states. A positive case in Wisconsin may influence future decisions. Updates provided by DATCP on HPAI (H5N1) in dairy cattle can be found on the DATCP [website](#).

**Who should event organizers contact if there are questions about HPAI (H5N1) before or during the event?**

Event organizers or fair veterinarians should reach out to the [District Veterinarian for their county or contact the Division of Animal Health at](#) (608) 224-4872 (business hours) or (800) 943-0003 (after hours and weekends).