

Guidance for Livestock Competitions and Shows

The Kansas Department of Agriculture knows that the COVID-19 pandemic is making it difficult to plan for livestock events. Show managers must make the best decision for each event with local, state, and federal regulation and health guidelines in mind. If a livestock show or competition is to take place, we strongly encourage event organizers to do their part to provide a safe, reliable environment and protect the health of participants.

The state's framework to resume business operations — “Ad Astra: A Plan to Re-Open Kansas” — was established via Executive Order No. 20-29 issued by Governor Laura Kelly on April 30, 2020. Under the re-opening framework, competitions and events are allowed to resume operations beginning in Phase Two under certain conditions. However, fairs, festivals, carnivals, parades, and large entertainment venues with capacity of 2,000+ are not allowed to open until Phase Three, and then only with distancing and mass gathering rules in place as outlined below.

It is important to note that **local governments retain the authority to impose additional restrictions**, and any specific guidelines not outlined by the Governor's re-opening framework are the jurisdiction of each local government. However, the new Executive Order states that while local governments may implement more restrictive orders or provisions, they must continue to allow the performance of essential functions identified in the Kansas Essential Functions Framework (KEFF).

Competitions, Livestock Shows in Phase Two

Competitions that are not affiliated with fairs or festivals can resume in Phase Two of the Re-Opening Plan **IF**:

- At least 6 feet of distance can be maintained between individuals or groups.
- Fundamental cleaning and public health practices are followed.
- AND they avoid any instances in which more than **15 individuals** (changed from 30 in initial guidance) are in one location and are unable to maintain 6 feet of distance with only infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity. This does not limit the total occupancy of a facility, but requires that facilities limit mass gatherings in areas and instances in which physical distancing cannot be maintained such as in entrances, lobbies, locker rooms, etc.
- Concessions must not include self-service food or beverages.

Livestock shows and competitions are events that involve competitive classes in show rings and **do not** include any entertainment or other group activities.

Fairs, Festivals, Carnivals, Parades in Phase Three: with restrictions

Phase Three will allow all education, activities, venues, and establishments to operate pursuant to mass gathering guidelines **IF**:

- At least 6 feet distance can be maintained between individuals or groups.
- Fundamental cleaning and public health practices are followed.
- **AND** they avoid any instances in which more than **45 individuals** (changed from 90 in initial guidance) are in one location and are unable to maintain 6 feet of distance with only infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity. This does not limit the total occupancy of a facility, but requires that facilities limit mass gatherings in areas and instances in which physical distancing cannot be maintained, such as in entrances, seating areas, etc.

Phase Out: fewer restrictions

- Stay-at-home orders are lifted and mass gathering limits are significantly relaxed. Mass gatherings are defined as instances in which individuals are in one location and are unable to maintain 6 feet of distance between individuals (not including individuals who reside together) with only infrequent moments of closer proximity.
- Once the state is in *Phase Out* the Governor will issue additional guidelines to explain what health metrics will trigger an elimination of all statewide restrictions.
- **Local governments retain authority to impose equal or more stringent restrictions.**
- All activities should follow mass gatherings guidelines and institute appropriate public health measures.

What do these mass gathering numbers mean?

Mass gatherings (maximum 15 in Phase Two and maximum 45 in Phase Three — these numbers were updated following the new Phase guidelines provided May 19) refers to situations in which the specified number of people are gathered in one place and unable to maintain social distancing (for example, the grandstand area during a livestock show). However, even if groups in those settings are kept under the allowable maximum group size, it is recommended that efforts are still made to encourage distancing as much as possible.

Best Practices

The Kansas Department of Agriculture consulted with K-State Research and Extension officials and considered CDC and KDHE guidelines for community events to minimize risk of COVID-19 infection. Based on those discussions, the following best practices are recommended for all livestock competitions and events taking place during any phase of the Re-Opening Plan, including Phase Out.

Before the Event

- Be aware of the COVID-19 situation in the community where the venue is located. It is **not** advisable to hold an event in an area with significant community transmission.
- Contact your local health department for information about its guidelines regarding COVID-19. The community where the event/venue is located may have additional restrictions in place.

- Speak with the venue manager. Discuss expectations, possible capacity limitations, and/or any new procedures for the facility and sanitation practices.
- Require pre-registration to eliminate in-person interaction on site.
- Develop flexible refund policies. Allow participants to stay home without penalty if they are sick, need to care for someone who is sick, at high risk for complications from COVID-19, or are quarantined due to exposure to someone with COVID-19.
- Reduce the size and duration of the show to minimize time spent on site. Consider limiting the number of participants overall and in individual classes.
- Determine what you will do if you must postpone or cancel the event. Make clear to participants how they will be notified if last-minute changes occur.
- Determine the guidelines you will follow regarding screening, temperature checks, face covering usage, etc. for staff, volunteers, and judges.
- If your event includes a market sale, consider reaching out to the local meat processor which typically serves this function for the show animals, to determine whether they have processing capacity.

During the Event

- Show classes should make every effort to foster social distancing, allowing 6 feet between competitors including in the prep areas, at the gate, and while in the show ring (not including individuals who reside together). Organizers should consider class size, ring size, and ring design in determining how this can best be achieved. Additional show staff may be needed in these areas to provide reminders and guidance to participants.
- Competitors, vendors and visitors that have any symptoms of COVID-19 should stay away from the event or leave the event if they become ill. Consider the use of COVID-19 symptom screening questions and/or signage.
- Consider requiring all attendees — including exhibitors, family members, and spectators — to sign in at arrival. Electronic or mobile sign-in options can help with efforts to maintain at least 6 feet of distance between those waiting to sign in.
- Spectators should be limited and if present, appropriate distancing maintained. It is advised to restrict access to bleachers or group seating areas.
- Consider providing a livestream of the competition online or virtual online shows and premium sales and encourage spectators to utilize this option.
- Children who are not competing should stay home. Children who do attend must be accompanied by an adult at all times. Ensure that children comply with applicable guidelines for appropriate distancing and use of face coverings. Note that children under age two should NOT wear cloth face coverings because of the danger of suffocation.
- Participants should leave the event venue as soon as they have finished showing.
- Parking areas, campgrounds, tie areas, and stalls should be set up and managed so that at least 6 feet of distance can be maintained between family groups.
- Implement cleaning and disinfection practices according to CDC guidelines, with regular sanitization of high-touch surfaces at least every two hours.
- Organizers should provide adequate hand washing or hand sanitizing stations, preferably non touch, throughout the venue.

- No matter if the event is indoors or outdoors, CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in settings where it is difficult to maintain at least 6 feet of distance between people. Note that children under age two should NOT wear cloth face coverings because of the danger of suffocation.
- Group meals should be prohibited.
- Concessions, licensed cafes and/or food vendors should follow the state guidelines for food establishments as applicable. Discourage self-serve stations including beverages and/or condiment dispensers and restrict access to tables and group eating areas. Food service establishment guidance can be found at www.agriculture.ks.gov/coronavirus.
- **Communicate and enforce new policies with competitors/exhibitors and the public.** Make expectations clear to participants by using physical signs, social media posts or radio segments before and during the event. Staff can provide reminders and guidance during the event.

These recommendations do not replace or supersede any requirements applicable to your operations pursuant to law or regulation. These guidelines are intended as a supplement to assist with safe operations during the COVID-19 pandemic and are subject to change.

Resources

- For 4-H Youth Livestock Shows: All 4-H livestock shows need to adhere to K-State Research and Extension guidelines. Please contact local Extension agents within the county or district for discussion guides that can assist in develop strategies for planning 4-H shows at county fairs.
- To see the full Re-Opening Plan and other current information about Kansas' response to COVID-19, go to www.covid.ks.gov.
- For guidance about cleaning and sanitizing to sign up for updates, go to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's COVID-19 Resource Center at www.kdhe.ks.gov/coronavirus.
- For the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Guidance on mass gatherings or large community events, go to www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/mass-gatherings-ready-for-covid-19.html.