



## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ORDER DECLARING INTRASTATE MOVEMENT RESTRICTIONS OF LACTATING DAIRY CATTLE TO FAIRS, SHOWS, OR EXHIBITIONS**

The Texas Animal Health Commission (the “Commission”) is authorized to establish movement restrictions against all or a portion of a state in which an animal disease exists to protect livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, and exotic fowl in this state from the disease.

Pursuant to Texas Agriculture Code §161.054, the Commission by rule may regulate the movement of animals and restrict the intrastate movement of animals.

As specified in Title 4, Texas Administrative Code §45.3, the Commission is required to protect all livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, and exotic fowl from avian influenza. Under Title 4 Texas Administrative Code §58.2, the Executive Director of the Commission is authorized to act for the commission in order to respond expeditiously to an animal health emergency and may act to eradicate and control any disease or agent of disease transmission that affects livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl from a disease or agent of transmission recognized by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as a foreign animal disease or reportable animal disease.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) is disease recognized by the USDA as a foreign animal disease or reportable animal disease. HPAI is an influenza virus that may cause illness and death in domestic poultry, fowl, and birds. HPAI is extremely infectious and can spread rapidly from flock to flock and is often fatal to chickens. In domestic poultry, HPAI can cause morbidity and mortality rates between 90-100 percent, leading to detrimental economic consequences.

In March of 2024, a strain of HPAI was detected in dairy cattle. While HPAI causes less severe illness in cattle, the novel movement of HPAI into livestock poses a threat to both livestock and poultry in Texas.

HPAI can spread easily through direct transmission or indirectly through contaminated material. Due to the highly contagious nature of HPAI, rapid response to outbreaks is required. Movement control of animals, animal products, and other potentially contaminated materials is critical to prevent transmission of HPAI.

While the USDA has developed and implemented interstate measures to control the spread of HPAI, the Executive Director of the Commission finds that additional intrastate movement restrictions are needed to mitigate the spread of the disease at



fairs, shows, or exhibitions.

The Executive Director further finds that the risk of disease exposure from the movement of lactating dairy cows to a show, fair, or exhibition, without a recent negative HPAI test could lead to unnecessary disease exposure across Texas.

The Executive Director, therefore, has determined that movement of untested lactating dairy animals to fairs, shows, and exhibitions in Texas, poses a threat to animal health in Texas.

To protect animal health in this state, the Executive Director imposes the following movement restrictions on lactating dairy cows prior to their intrastate movement to a fair, show, or exhibition:

- Each lactating dairy cow moving intrastate to a fair, show, or exhibition must have a negative PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test result for Influenza A virus from an individual milk sample collected and tested at an approved National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) laboratory using a NAHLN approved assay within 7 days prior to movement. These animals may return to their home herd using the same negative test result provided the exhibition or show does not exceed 10 days of length. This testing is available to producers at no cost through USDA APHIS at NAHLN laboratories. Producers may also apply for reimbursement of shipping and veterinary fees for collection of samples.
- Prior to interstate movement, lactating dairy cattle are required to receive a negative PCR test for Influenza A virus at an approved NAHLN laboratory using a NAHLN approved assay and in accordance with the Federal Order effective April 29, 2024 <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/federal-order-faq.pdf>
- The HPAI Dairy Testing Protocol requires the following:
  - 1) Sample collection must be performed by a USDA category II accredited veterinarian or a person under the direct supervision of USDA category II accredited veterinarian working for the dairy cattle herd.
  - 2) Milk from each quarter of the individual cow must be pooled together to create a total sample between 3-10 ml of milk.
  - 3) Each lactating dairy cow's sample must be kept individualized. Samples shall not be pooled between cows.



**TEXAS ANIMAL HEALTH COMMISSION**

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This order is issued pursuant to Texas Agriculture Code §161.054 and Title 4, Texas Administrative Code §58 and is effective immediately.

This order will remain in effect until 60 days after the last detection of H5N1 in cattle herds in the United States.

As previously noted, the USDA has developed and implemented interstate measures to control the spread of HPAI. In addition to the Federal movement requirements, please verify if the state of destination has any additional entry requirements if moving lactating dairy cows out-of-state to a show, fair, or exhibition, or for any other reason.

Signed July 25, 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lewis R. Dinges D.V.M.".

Lewis R. "Bud" Dinges, D.V.M.  
Executive Director  
Texas Animal Health Commission