2020 Ozark Empire Fair Rabbit shows cancelled due to Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus Serotype 2 (RHDV2)

For Immediate Release

June 26, 2020

Following recommendations from the Missouri Department of Agriculture, United States Department of Agriculture and International Association of Fairs and Expositions, the Livestock Committee for the Ozark Empire Fair has elected to cancel the 2020 Ozark Empire Fair Rabbit Show originally scheduled July 31-August 2 in an effort to minimize the risk of transmission of Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus Serotype 2 (RHDV2).

RHDV2 is a highly contagious and, unlike other rabbit hemorrhagic disease viruses, it affects both domestic and wild rabbits. Many times, the only signs of disease are sudden death and blood stained noses caused by internal bleeding.

The virus is spread via direct contact with infected rabbits, as well as their meat or fur. The virus can also be spread indirectly through contact with an infected rabbit’s excretions, cages, bedding, feeders, equipment, etc. People can also serve as a fomite in the spread of the virus when handling an infected rabbit or their materials mentioned previously and then carrying the virus to a naïve rabbit.

The movement of live rabbits, such as for shows or fairs, presents a significant risk for spread of the disease due to the commingling of rabbits. The Missouri Department of Agriculture recommends postponing or cancelling rabbit shows until more is known about the distribution of the virus and/or until vaccination is available.

RHDV2 is not infectious to people or other domestic animals. However, rabbits can carry other diseases such as tularemia or plaque, disease that can cause illness in people. Do not handle or consume sick or dead rabbits, and do not allow pets to come into contact with or consume rabbit carcasses.

RHDV2 is a reportable disease. If suspected, this disease should be immediately reported to the Missouri State Veterinarians office at (573) 751-3377, or the USDA Area Veterinarian in Charge (AVIC) at (573) 658-9850.

Information about other 2020 Ozark Empire Fair livestock shows and events can be found at www.ozarkempirefair.com.

###