



Dear 4-H/FFA Leaders and Members,

We have important news regarding the poultry show at the 2019 Big Fresno Fair. As many of you know, beginning in May 2018, an outbreak of Virulent Newcastle disease spread among the backyard bird populations in four Southern California counties: Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura. The virus was also found in three commercial facilities in Riverside County. Nearly 500,000 backyard and commercial birds were euthanized in an attempt to contain the spread of the virus.

As a result, the California State Veterinarian is recommending that all poultry exhibits that include birds from high-risk counties (Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura) be cancelled as outlined in a letter sent from the California Department of Food & Agriculture in January 2019.

After much evaluation, The Big Fresno Fair has decided to proactively cancel its poultry show at the 2019 Big Fresno Fair. The virulent Newcastle disease is a highly contagious virus affecting the respiratory, nervous and digestive systems of birds and poultry that is fatal and can spread quickly. Given the vastness of the commercial poultry facilities in our region, the risk is far too great to inadvertently infect our local poultry population and it is better to be proactive and safe.

We know as agricultural stewards you will understand our decision. We thank you for your continued support and participation in The Big Fresno Fair's livestock program, as you are who make our program so great! We look forward to bringing the poultry show back to the Fair in the future.

For more information on Newcastle disease, please visit the California Department of Food & Agriculture's website at: www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/newcastle_disease_info.html

Respectfully,

John C. Alkire, CEO
The Big Fresno Fair

Terri Collins
Livestock Superintendent

CC: Stacy Rianda & Lauri King, Deputy Managers II

