



For immediate release

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**Santa Maria Fairpark board cancels Santa Barbara County Fair
poultry show`**

The Santa Maria Fairpark Board voted Tuesday to accept the recommendation of the California State Veterinarian to cancel the poultry show scheduled for the 2019 Santa Barbara County Fair. The move is a precaution in light of an outbreak of virulent Newcastle Disease, a disease of birds that can also be contracted by humans.

The decision impacts the turkey and chicken meat pen competitions, as well as all breeding poultry competitions. The Santa Barbara County Fair joins a number of other county fairs and poultry organizations in following state recommendations to cancel Southern California poultry shows in Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties.

Santa Maria Fairpark CEO Richard Persons said the board decided to accept the recommendation now in anticipation of youth making purchases of poultry they plan to show at the Santa Barbara County Fair in July.

“The youth livestock program has always been at the heart of the Santa Barbara County Fair,” Persons said. “But in light of the outbreak and the recommendation of the State Veterinarian, we felt it prudent to do our part to protect poultry production on the Central Coast.”

Virulent Newcastle Disease is a highly contagious respiratory disease of poultry that spreads quickly, and can also be contracted by humans. It is nearly always fatal to birds, and can cause flu-like symptoms in humans. It has been positively identified in backyard flocks and commercial poultry operations in Southern California. The current outbreak started in May of 2018, and more than 60,000 birds have been euthanized to date as a result. People who identify sick or dead poultry or wild birds should call the State Veterinarian’s sick bird hotline at 866-922-2472.

Other livestock events are expected to proceed as usual during the Santa Barbara County Fair, which runs July 10-14 at the Santa Maria Fairpark.

For more information, visit www.santamariafairpark.com or Like us on [Facebook](#).

About the Santa Maria Fairpark

The Santa Maria Fairpark serves as the hub for major events and community activities on California’s Central Coast. The state-owned facility hosts the annual Santa Maria Valley Strawberry Festival, which attracts more than 70,000 people and is home to its headlining event the Santa Barbara County Fair, which is attended by more than 150,000 people.