

Public Walkways, Animal Feeding and Petting Areas

Health and Safety legislation requires you to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare of visitors to your attraction, “so far as is reasonably practicable”. It is considered reasonable that adequate provisions be available for the public to maintain a reasonable level of hygiene when attending the attraction and taking part in the various activities you offer. It is also reasonable that you identify when they may be at risk and that you apply very simple risk reduction measures:

1. Remove the risk totally if possible.
2. Take necessary steps to reduce the impact of the risk if it cannot be removed.
3. Inform the public of the risks that remain and what they need to do to prevent exposure.
4. Ensure you have the facilities for them to carry out the measures.
5. Take adequate steps to remind the public of the need for vigilance and cooperation.
6. Constantly monitor your provisions to ensure the provisions are available and operational at all times.

There is a simple rule of thumb that must be introduced to ensure you comply with your obligations, particularly where hygiene is concerned; IF THE CONTROL MEASURE IS NOT AVAILABLE OR HAS FAILED, THEN THE ACTIVITY, WHATEVER IT MAY BE, MUST NOT TAKE PLACE.

Specific guidance has been written by the industry and HSE regarding the necessary hygiene controls in feeding and petting areas. This resulted in an industry Code of Practice which you should now apply.

A copy of the code can be downloaded from the NFAN website <http://www.farmattractions.net/nfan-resources/code-practice/>

Although the Code of Practice concentrates mainly on Zoonosis Infection, the controls outlined are effective for other infections that can be contracted when coming into contact with animals and animal faeces. Most at risk from infection are young children and the elderly, although it is possible that other people can be affected if they have some other underlying medical condition.

When setting out the activities at your attraction you must decide what you want and how you are going to deliver it, including how you intend to maintain the health, safety and welfare of the public. You should also decide where you are intending contact to be allowed and where you are not. You can then measure your facilities against the checklist below and the Code of Practice. If you are NOT intending contact to occur in a specific location, and you find that contact can occur although unintentionally, you must make provisions to either keep the public or the animals at a safe NON Contact distance.

Non-Contact is by far the safest option when protecting against infections, but it does remove some of the reasons why families come to the attraction in the first place and it may deter them from attending. There is a balance between allowing controlled contact and offering good hygiene facilities. By applying some very important basic rules, you can ensure you achieve your aims and what is considered Best Practice.

The measures highlighted in green are essential to maintaining legal compliance.

- 1. You must complete a risk assessment for this area of your activity and either have completed the installation of control measures or you can demonstrate a planned delivery of the controls**
- 2. No member of the public is allowed to enter an animal pen where there is deep litter or bedding.**
- 3. No animal contact is allowed in walkways where you do not allow animal contact, play or food consumption areas. All such areas must be double fenced.**
- 4. Animal contact must only be possible in purpose designed petting areas with adequate provisions for hand washing.**
- 5. No liquid run off or faecal material bedding overspill from the pens must enter the public areas.**
6. Design your activities to take place without the need to enter an animal enclosure. It is possible for instance, to allow children to collect eggs without entering the area occupied by the chickens.

7. **All animal PETTING ACTIVITIES must be closely supervised and in an area with proper provision of hand washing facilities. Animal feeding areas should be supported by signage reminding the public to wash their hands**
8. **All entrances and exits from designated feeding or petting areas must have a hand wash station fitted with running water and liquid soap. The use of paper towels at hand wash stations closely adjacent to contact areas is also required as it provides another opportunity to remove debris from the hands.**
9. **Hand wash stations should be at suitable heights for young children as well as adults.**
10. **Wherever possible, warm water should be provided at a temperature of around 28°. If the water is either too hot or too cold for young children it will result in them not wanting to use the facility. Warm water must be available at the main hand washing points.**
11. **Hand Gels are not considered fit for purpose as a primary and adequate bacterial control measure. They must be considered as an additional measure to proper hand washing. Ensure you signs remind the public of this.**
12. Regular cleaning of hand wash facilities to be carried out throughout the day.
13. **Hand wash stations must be suitably designed with troughs or sinks large enough to facilitate hands.**
14. **Hand wash stations must be very visible with signage reminding the public to wash their hands when leaving the petting or contact area. It is recommended that signage be pictorial.**
15. **All gates and fences in contact areas should be inspected daily for faecal material. All faecal material must be removed and cleaned to avoid public contamination.**
16. **Signage placed around the attraction reminding the public not to eat, drink or smoke whilst walking in contact areas, or put fingers in mouths unless they have very recently been properly washed.**
17. Ensure you have information for visitors with a balanced description of the risks of infection and the measures required. The information should also point out where hand washing facilities can be found, and how to recognise them.
18. **Do not allow any animals or domestic fowl to stray into the attraction's clean areas. Should this accidentally happen ensure a cleaning regime is identified and implemented in all cases.**
19. Have a management plan for large parties or school visits that controls the number of people visiting each contact location at any one time. Agree this plan with the visiting leader before the tour or visit starts.
20. **Ensure that locations where animal cross over internal public walkways are kept to an absolute minimum, and the crossing point is as narrow as practically possible. A thorough cleaning regime must be carried out to remove any faecal material where the public walk.**
21. **Animal movements must be controlled and planned. They must, wherever practically possible, be kept to times when the public are not on site or you have physically restrained the public from approaching near the crossing point until after the animal movement is completed and the crossing point cleaned of all faecal material.**
22. Any public footpaths that enter the attraction site should be managed. The simple recommendations are:
 - i. Erect signs at each point where the public footpath enters the property informing the footpath user that hygiene controls apply on this farm attraction and you request them to keep the designated foot path.
 - ii. Fence the footpath to restrain the footpath user from straying into areas where you do not want them to go. Consider double fencing as this will deter the footpath user from trying to make contact with the animals.
 - iii. Plan and erect an animal crossing point at a suitable point in the fencing.
 - iv. Fix a bridging walkway, that can be removed when animal movements are required, across the designated crossing point you have placed in the fence line to assist the public to cross without walking on the ground where animals have walked.

You can achieve these requirements by:

- a) Sensibly planning your attraction to ensure the public are routed away from those locations where work is carried out, manure is stored or animals are treated.
- b) Carry out a risk assessment of contact and non contact areas to ensure you have removed the possibility of infection from your animals or facilities.
- c) Making sure there is enough hand washing facilities available when the public leave each contact area. You can calculate the number of hand wash stations by multiplying the peak number of people that leave the contact area every 15 minutes by 2 [*the average time that it takes to wash hands thoroughly*] and then finally divide it by 15. That will arrive at a suggested number of hand wash stations you may need. Small queues are acceptable after some contact activities, but if possible, manage the contact activity to allow for a gradual finishing which will reduce the queues to a sensible, manageable size.
- d) Making sure you provide a hand wash station near the exit if the attraction.
- e) Making sure that a hand wash station is located very near eating areas.
- f) Making sure the hand wash stations are visible, are kept clean and do not deter their use by their appearance.
- g) Double fencing the non contact areas to signify and deter the public from reaching and touching animals or faeces. This can be achieved by placing a single or double strand electric fence on the animal side of the paddock to restrain the animals. You do not always have to invest in costly wooden fencing.
- h) Designing your feeding stations so that the public do not have to enter the area where bedding or faeces are present. Feeding tubes are very popular and it also helps to manage the animal's expectations regarding humans always having food available. Hand feeding of pigs is especially risky as the pig cannot always make out the difference between fingers and food pellets.
- i) Have signage that encourages safe feeding where you are encouraging it. Pictograms showing how to hold food by the flat of the hand will help the public to have the fun of feeding but not get their fingers nibbled. Digital camera are especially helpful in the production of good quality signs.
- j) Training staff on how to approach the public and encourage the hand wash regime. It is doubly important for your staff to be seen to apply the hand wash regime and thereby set an example.

There are some additional considerations that must be thought about when planning your provisions.

- Sufficient water storage or supply to ensure continuity to hand washes stations on a busy day.
- Sufficient drainage capacity to deal with the output from the hand wash stations on a busy day.
- Standing areas where hand washing will take place not becoming slippery if spillage occurs.
- Young children being able reach the hand wash basin.
- Providing taps that are easily operated. It is highly recommended that you select taps that will not require contact to turn them off. Non Concussive Taps are designed so that you only push the top down to receive the water. They turn themselves off, usually after 9 seconds or so. This type of tap is also extremely successful for water conservancy as they cannot be left on.
- Selection of liquid soap that is effective in both warm and cold water as you will not be able to guarantee warm water availability at all times throughout the day.
- Regular cleaning and bin emptying throughout the day.
- Regular monitoring of water temperature is very important. We know that on a very busy day the warm water will go cold for a while due to demand. The time the water takes to warm up should be monitored and if it is getting too far out of balance, the water heater may need a service.

Risk Assessment

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Hazard Identified	Examples of how increased risk or failure can occur	Likelihood	Severity
Public contracting a bacterial infection	Lack of correct provisions in the correct location Lack of visible provisions Lack of information Failure of supply Poor layout / facility design	Possible	Possibly Fatal More likely a Severe Illness
Public making physical contact with animals in non contact area	Lack of correct provisions in the correct location Poor layout / facility design Structural failure of a control measure	Possible	Exposure of person to bacterial infection
Failure of water supply or drainage	Structural failure Lack of sufficient provisions / capacity Sudden raising of attendee numbers Lack of maintenance or inspections	Possible	Closure of areas affected Exposure of person to bacterial infection
Animal faeces or Run Off escaping into public area	Failure of cleaning regime Poor layout / facility design Lack of attention by staff	Possible	Closure of areas affected Exposure of person to bacterial infection

Control Measures Introduced	Predicted Outcome	Additional measures required
Introduction of 22 listed control measures	Reduction of risk to an acceptable level and you can demonstrate you are applying best practice	Continual monitoring to ensure the control measures work throughout the season
Introduction of all essential control measures only	You still run the risk that the controls may not be as effective as you desire and you may not be able to claim you are operating best practice	Introduction of the remainder is recommended, or extra supervision will be required
Introduction of selective controls only	You will run the risk of incidents that would be considered as under your influence and the likelihood of enforcement action is very possible. You also run the risk of a member of the public making a false accusation	Full safety review be carried out with and action be taken to introduce controls within the next 6 months.
Lack of any control measures	Enforcement action is highly probable as you will not be complying with your legal obligations.	Closure of activities until controls are fully introduced

Risk Assessment Controls Checklist

Public Walkways, Animal Feeding and Petting Areas

Date of review: _____ Person completing the review: _____

	Requirement	Comp ✓
1	No member of the public can enter an animal enclosure where there is deep litter or bedding without overcoming the controls in place.	
2	No animal contact is possible in walkways, play or food consumption areas except by accident.	
3	Animal contact is a planned activity and I have made adequate provisions for it to happen.	
4	There is no liquid run off from the pens into public areas.	
5	I have designed the activities to take place without entering an animal enclosure.	
6	Animal petting is closely supervised and I have adequate staff to carry out this function	
7 a	All exits from designated feeding or petting areas have a hand wash station fitted with running water and liquid soap.	
7 b	Paper towels are available at each hand wash station.	
8	Hand wash stations are at suitable heights for young children as well as adults.	
9	Warm water is provided at a temperature of around 28°.	
10	Hand Gels are not be relied on as an adequate bacterial control measure.	
11	Regular cleaning of hand wash facilities is carried out throughout the day.	
12	Hand wash stations are suitably designed with troughs or sinks large enough to facilitate hands.	
13	Hand wash stations are very visible with signage reminding the public to wash their hands when leaving the petting or contact area	
14	Regular cleaning of gates and animal divisions where the public can make contact is carried out at least daily.	
15	Signage is placed around the attraction reminding the public not to eat or drink whilst walking in contact areas, or put fingers in mouths unless they have very recently been properly washed.	
16	I have information for visitors with a balanced description of the risks of infection and the measures required. The information also points out where hand washing facilities can be found, and how to recognise them.	

	Requirement	Comp ✓
17	I do not allow any animals or domestic fowl to stray into the attraction's clean areas. Should this accidentally happen, there is a cleaning regime and it is implemented in all cases.	
18	I have a management plan for large parties or school visits that controls the number of people visiting each contact location at any one time. I also agree this plan with the visiting leader before the tour or visit starts.	
19	Locations where animal cross over internal public walkways are kept to an absolute minimum, and the crossing point is as narrow as practically possible.	
20	Animal movements are controlled and planned.	
21	Establishments that have public footpaths entering the site have erected signs at each point where the public footpath enters the property informing the footpath user that hygiene controls apply and have request them to keep the designated foot path.	
22	Establishments that have public footpaths have fenced the footpath to restrain the footpath user from straying into areas where you do not want them to go.	
23	Establishments that have public footpaths have erected an animal crossing point at a suitable point in the fencing.	
24	Establishments that have public footpaths have a bridging walkway, that can be removed when animal movements are required, across the designated crossing point you have placed in the fence line to assist the public to cross without walking on the ground where animals have walked.	