Rabbit Exhibitor's Self Certification of Animal Health

Name of Owner: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

I, the undersigned, hereby verify the following:
   (Parent or guardian must sign for children under age 18)

1. I am the **owner/authorized caretaker/transporter** *(circle as applicable)* of the rabbit(s) identified on this form, have been visually examined.
2. I understand that rabbits showing any signs of, or having recent exposure to (within 21 days), contagious or infectious disease are not permitted to enter the fair/show premises. These conditions include but are not limited to the following:
   - ☐ SKIN & HEAD: No visible evidence of skin infections, discharge for the eyes or nose or excessive head shaking with particular emphasis on ***Ear mites, Fur mites, Myxomatosis, and Ringworm.***
   - ☐ REPRODUCTIVE: No signs of sexually transmitted diseases with particular emphasis on ***Syphilis.***
   - ☐ RESPIRATORY: No signs of infectious respiratory disease such as sneezing, white nasal discharge or excessive tearing which are all common signs of ***Snuffles***.
   - ☐ INTESTINAL: No evidence of soft droppings, soiling on rump or hocks consistent with ***Diarrhea.***
   - ☐ OTHER**:** Recent exposure to, or clinical signs of, any contagious or infectious disease conditions that would exclude rabbits from exhibition. ***Viral Hemorrhagic Disease (VHD)***
3. I have read and understand the above guidelines.
4. I have visually examined the animals I am presenting for exhibit.
5. I agree not to present for exhibition rabbits showing any signs of contagious or infectious disease.

#	Tattoo	Registry Name or #	Date of Birth	Sex	Breed
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

Date of inspection: _____Number inspected _____Signature_____
Printed Name_____ Event_____
   (Parent or guardian must sign for children under age 18)

Dear exhibition sponsors and participants,

At the outset, the Department would like to express its appreciation of your ongoing support for agriculture and, more directly, animal health.

Over the past several fair and show seasons, the Department has been exploring with our constituents, ways to improve the health of animals at exhibition in New Hampshire. Historically, the Department has allowed the use of a "one-time" certificate of veterinary inspection issued at the beginning of the fair season. This will continue, and additionally this year, we will offer for your use an "exhibitor self certification" in an effort to increase the involvement of exhibitors in excluding unfit or at-risk animals from fairs and shows. The Department views meaningful and engaged exhibitor involvement throughout the season as crucial to success. We also support exhibition sponsors in encouraging the exclusion of unfit or at-risk animals from exhibition. To this end the Department will be happy to work with fairs, shows or other exhibition sponsors, as well as 4H, FFA, and other potential groups of exhibitors, to train them on the basic components of the self-certification. The system of animal health at exhibitions is generally supported by four legs. To be successful, each must be in place:

1. An informed, engaged and accountable exhibitor
2. The accredited veterinarian advising the exhibitor
3. An informed, engaged and empowered exhibition sponsor
4. A rational health policy enforced primarily through collaborations

The Certificate of Veterinary Inspection process will remain essentially unchanged. In past years, only the accredited veterinarian and fair personnel have had formal responsibilities to protect animal health at exhibitions. There were few expectations placed on the exhibitor. Sick animals presented for exhibition were often confusing as they were accompanied by a completed Certificate of Veterinary Inspection, even if the inspection was completed weeks or months earlier. Most exhibitors and sponsors have historically complied with the regulations, but for various reasons some have not. This has led to animals that should be excluded being presented for exhibition. In some cases, there has been considerable sponsor time expended to resolve the associated issues, not to mention the risk to the health of other exhibitors' animals.

Using the *Fair Exhibitor's Self-Certification of Animal Health* should improve this system; a draft copy is enclosed for your review. In this model, exhibitors should evaluate their animals no more than 24 hours prior to arrival at exhibition, preferably before leaving the farm or point of origin. Assessment is based on the use of lay person criteria. Exhibitors should exclude animals found unfit or at-risk for exhibition at that time. Additionally, they should document this evaluation on the *Fair Exhibitor's Self-Certification of Animal Health* form which certifies they have conducted the evaluation and found the animals to be qualified. The certification process and the multiple event form have been modeled on other state's experience where they were found to be user friendly and effective. As this is a new concept in New Hampshire, you may receive questions or hear concerns about this process. The single most important message to the exhibitor is to help them understand what normal and healthy is. This will enable them to be better able to recognize readily apparent abnormalities which are associated with infectious disease and exclude those animals from show before leaving the farm. Thus, this system will also provide many opportunities for education of both exhibitors and exhibition sponsors.

In conclusion, every effort will be made to have the Department available to support any reasonable request for training. As always, thank you for your past and future contributions to safe and healthy animal exhibitions in New Hampshire.

Please contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Stephen K. Crawford, DVM
New Hampshire State Veterinarian

Encl.

Cc: Lorraine S. Merrill, Commissioner