

IF A DEMONSTRATION OR ANIMAL ACTIVIST ACTIVITY HAPPENS AT AN EVENT



WHAT EVENT MANAGERS OR SUPERINTENDENTS CAN DO

1

Accomplish the following:

- Inform local police of potential issues about animal exhibits and shows so, if they are called, they have a better understanding about how to respond.
- Become familiar with the local “permit to demonstrate” process, rules and criteria. Check before the event to determine if a permit has been issued.
- Check the “permit to demonstrate” of any group or individual that attempts or desires to picket or demonstrate within property boundaries or public areas adjacent to the fairgrounds.
- Ensure that groups with legal permits adhere to the rules.
- Hold a general meeting before the fair to discuss animal-care issues and protocol for addressing situations if they arise.

2

Do not overreact. Becoming defensive does not facilitate a constructive conversation and may imply you are trying to hide something from the public. If activists are demonstrating, they will get media attention even if you do nothing. They may receive more publicity, and possibly sympathy, if you overreact.

3

Do not argue. Appoint a designated, trained spokesperson to handle necessary responses about animal well-being questions. If you are put in a situation where you must answer questions or discuss animal projects, stick with facts. If you are unsure of yourself or are being overwhelmed, politely end the discussion and refer the person to the trained spokesperson.

4

It is not the correct approach to immediately call the police if someone demonstrates. First, ask to see the permit to demonstrate. If a permit is provided, make sure all rules are followed. If a permit was not obtained, notify the individuals about the legal requirements.

5

Communicate with exhibitors about this situation. Emphasize numbers 2 and 3.

6

Ensure the proper care of animals at all times. Remember, the best examples of animal wellbeing can come from the farmers, 4-H'ers and FFA members who provide the best possible care for their animals.

7

Be polite and courteous to demonstrators. They may be trained in confrontation techniques, such as trying to excite a situation and they may have “canned” answers to questions. Remain calm and do not let them incite unnecessary emotion. When in doubt, follow numbers 2 and 3.

8

Use your common sense and be professional and polite at all times.



IF A DEMONSTRATION OR ANIMAL ACTIVIST ACTIVITY HAPPENS AT AN EVENT



WHAT PARENTS AND VOLUNTEERS CAN DO

1

Ensure the proper care of animals at all times. Remember, the best examples of animal wellbeing can come from the farmers, 4-H'ers and FFA members who provide the best possible care for their animals.

- *Before the event:* Help your youth practice telling their story by answering such questions as why they take livestock projects and how they care for their animals.

2

Work with your local fair board to use guidelines or recommendations for the care and well-being of animals. This demonstrates a responsibility to promote best practices.

3

Your organization or fair board should have a designated, trained spokesperson to handle necessary responses about animal well-being questions. If you are put in a situation where you must answer questions or discuss animal projects, stick with facts. If you are unsure of yourself or are being overwhelmed, politely end the discussion and refer the person to the trained spokesperson.

- *Before the event:* know the name of the designated spokesperson in case you need it.

4

Do not overreact. Becoming defensive does not facilitate a constructive conversation and may imply you are trying to hide something from the public. If activists are demonstrating, they will get media attention even if you do nothing. They may receive more publicity, and possibly sympathy, if you overreact.

5

Do not argue. Allow your designated, trained spokesperson to handle necessary responses about animal well-being questions. If you are put in a situation where you must answer questions or discuss animal projects, stick with facts. If you are unsure of yourself or are being overwhelmed, politely end the discussion and refer the person to the trained spokesperson.

6

It is not the correct approach to immediately call the police if someone demonstrates. If proper pre-event preparation occurs, the superintendent and trained spokesperson should know if a permit to demonstrate was issued. First, contact the superintendent or trained spokesperson.

7

Be polite and courteous to demonstrators; set a good example for youth. Demonstrators may be trained in confrontation techniques, such as trying to excite a situation and they may have "canned" answers to questions. Remain calm and do not let them incite unnecessary emotion. When in doubt, follow numbers 4 and 5.

8

Use your common sense and be professional and polite at all times.

Questions can be directed to: Ty Peckman, Assistant Extension Professor
MU Extension, tpeckman@missouri.edu, 573-882-3835

