

REDUCING RISK OF CROSS INFECTION AT SHOWS

REASONS FOR: At the beginning of 2009 there were a number of complaints from exhibitors about cats developing symptoms of gastro-intestinal infection after attending shows. This is obviously of great concern and although the risk of cross infection cannot be eliminated completely we must make every effort to reduce it.

POSSIBLE CAUSES: Feline Coronavirus is a very common virus which many cats carry without harm but some strains cause gastro-enteritis and a small proportion of infected cats/kittens do develop FIP and die. Other viral, bacterial and protozoal infections may also be involved. The main route of transmission is via faeces.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN:

SHOW MANAGERS; To check that penning companies are providing approved disinfectant (Anigene) at appropriate dilution (1:100). Anigene remains effective for 6 months after dilution so inefficacy due to prolonged storage of ready diluted disinfectant should not be problem but SMs should check this point when booking.

EXHIBITORS; Although penning companies do clean pens between shows it is obviously not possible for any of us to oversee this personally therefore it is strongly recommended that exhibitors disinfect their own pens before putting their cats inside. NB Disinfectant spray bottles must not be used as the spray mist can be irritant. It is suggested that an appropriate note is added to schedules reminding exhibitors of these points as follows:

Sprays must not be used in the hall as spray mist persists in the air and can irritate cats' mucous membranes. Therefore exhibitors are advised to use other means (eg wipes) to disinfect pens before penning cats. If owners wish to bring their own diluted disinfectant small squeeze bottles which produce no spray are permitted. All disinfectants must be approved for safety and efficacy in cats eg Anigene. Safe4.

EVERYONE HANDLING CATS (Judges, Vets, Stewards.) Meticulous use of disinfectant between cats is **ESSENTIAL** at all times. All easily cleaned surfaces (hands including wrists, tables, trolleys) that come into contact with cats must be thoroughly wetted with disinfectant and any excess wiped off with clean paper towel. **It is easy for such a repetitive task to become perfunctory but everyone must make a conscious effort to maintain a high standard of hygiene throughout the day.**

To help minimise the risk of cross infection, judges/stewards must not clean litter trays themselves and cats with significant faecal contamination of fur should not be judged. **SMs must provide disposable gloves and nappy bags for use when disposing of faeces and this task should be done by someone who is not handling cat repeatedly eg a member of the show committee or a duty vet's steward if the owner is not available.** A steward noticing a dirty litter tray should ask for the tray to be cleaned as soon as possible and disposable gloves should always be worn by the person doing it

If a pen is heavily contaminated with faeces the cat should not be judged until the pen has been cleaned and disinfected. The duty vet must be consulted if there is any abnormality such as diarrhoea or presence of blood. If the problem is so severe that adjacent pen's are affected the cat/s in these pens must be moved to alternative accommodation as soon as possible. If a cat is significantly contaminated with faeces the duty vet must be consulted and will make a decision as to whether the cat should be withdrawn. **If a cat cannot be cleaned adequately to prevent contamination of judges/stewards clothing when handled it must be withdrawn from competition and not handled again by judges/stewards.**
