



Farm visits and risks

Visiting a farm is an enjoyable and educational experience for many people, particularly children. Farm animals can carry bugs like people and hand washing should be thorough.

The bacterial infection E. coli O157 is a particular health risk and can cause serious illness. Our farm has never had an incident of this nature, but we would urge everyone to be vigilant and take hand washing seriously.

Washing your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water immediately after you have had contact with animals will reduce the risk of infection and children should be supervised at all times and made to wash their hands properly.



What to do when visiting our farm park

Following the simple rules listed below will help to keep you and your children safe from E. coli O157 and other infections that may be found on open farms. Pregnant women need to take particular care.

- Do not put hands on faces or fingers in mouths while petting animals or walking round the farm.
- Do not kiss farm animals nor allow children to put their faces close to animals.
- Do not eat or drink while touching animals or walking round the farm. This includes not eating sweets, crisps or chewing gum.
- Do not eat anything that has fallen on the floor.
- Do not use gels or wipes instead of washing hands with soap and water. Gels and wipes do not remove E. coli O157 in dirt.

- Do wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after you have touched animals, fences or other surfaces in animal areas.
- Do wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before eating or drinking.
- Do remove and clean boots or shoes that might have become soiled and clean pushchair wheels. Then wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Do supervise children closely to ensure that they wash their hands thoroughly.

What should I do if I feel unwell after a farm visit?

If you or anyone in your group is sick or has diarrhoea within two weeks of visiting the farm, contact your GP as soon as possible. If you or anyone in your group, particularly a young child, has bloody diarrhoea, seek immediate emergency medical attention.

Children under five with severe diarrhoea should not attend school/nursery/group childcare until they have been free of sickness or diarrhoea for two days. Parents should confirm with their health professional whether it is safe for them to return before the child returns to school or nursery.

Where can I get more information?

Further information on E. coli O157 is available on the Health Protection Agency website at: www.hpa.org.uk