

March 30, 2005

Dr. Anne Schuchat, Acting Director
National Center for Infectious Diseases
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Mailstop C-14
1600 Clifton Rd.
Atlanta, GA 30333

1 page via fax: 404-639-3970

Dear Dr. Schuchat:

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is an international nonprofit organization with more than 800,000 members and supporters dedicated to the protection of animals. As you are undoubtedly aware, Florida health officials are investigating an outbreak of possible *E. coli* infection in 15 children, all of whom recently visited petting zoos at Florida fairs. Although *E. coli* has not yet been confirmed as the source of the infection, it seems likely that it soon will be, given the rash of *E. coli* outbreaks associated with petting zoos all over the country.

To avoid contagion, the CDC has issued warnings against direct and indirect contact with animals in petting zoos. Given that petting-zoo-driven *E. coli* outbreaks continue to occur regularly, we don't believe that this goes far enough. The only way to prevent potentially fatal incidents of this sort is to avoid contact with animals in petting zoos altogether. We are calling on the CDC to take an unequivocal public stance against these hazardous displays. Such a decree would hold considerable weight and emphasize to the general public the very real health risks associated with petting zoos.

May we please hear from you about this matter? I can be reached at extension 8003, by e-mail at JenO@peta.org, or by fax at 757-628-0781. Thank you for your time and attention.

Yours truly,



Jennifer O'Connor
Animals in Entertainment Specialist
Captive Animals & Entertainment Issues Department



PETA

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL
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AN INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATION DEDICATED
TO PROTECTING
THE RIGHTS OF ALL ANIMALS