

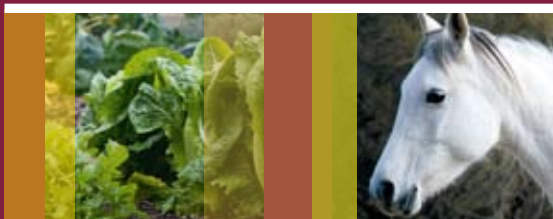


Australian Government

Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

vital information

for small rural landholders




What is biosecurity?

Biosecurity is protecting animals and plants, the environment and people's health from pests and diseases.

It includes trying to prevent new pests and diseases from arriving, and helping to control outbreaks when they do occur. Robust response arrangements are in place to combat outbreaks but preventing pest and disease incursions in the first place, remains a national priority.





What inadequate biosecurity could cost and what's at risk

- Farm exports contribute billions of dollars to the Australian economy each year.
 - A single case of a major disease or pest could severely jeopardise trade and undermine the livelihood of a significant number of Australians.
 - Beyond those directly involved in agriculture an outbreak of foot and mouth disease could cost the nation more than \$12 billion.
 - Karnal bunt in wheat could cost Western Australia alone up to \$1.3 billion and halt exports.
 - Some pests and diseases would not only impact on commercial enterprises but also have dramatic consequences for natural ecosystems.
 - A new animal disease that can spread to humans such as bird flu, SARS or Nipah virus would have devastating effects on the broader Australian economy including health, education, hospitality, travel, tourism and business investment.
 - Around 75% of new human diseases have originated in animals.
 - In Australia, millions of dollars are spent annually on eradicating plant pests and diseases.
 - Invasive species are the greatest threat to Australian biodiversity.
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What you can do to reduce pest and disease outbreaks

Livestock and Birds

Livestock

» Keep it clean

Washing your hands with soapy water before and after handling animals is one of the easiest biosecurity measures you can take. This is particularly important if you are dealing with animals you suspect are unwell.

Soil, organic material, mucus, saliva and manure can carry disease which then can easily be spread on clothing, equipment and vehicles. Vehicles and equipment should be cleaned after each use or at least between different groups of animals.

Where animals from different properties are using the one vehicle, the interior of the float or truck should be washed out and disinfected before loading the new animals.





Keeping all of your gear and equipment clean is important. Don't share your animal's gear or equipment with neighbours or other people. This includes drenching and injecting equipment, headstalls, leadropes and saddlery. If any equipment has been used by other animals, thoroughly clean and disinfect it before using it on your animals. Disinfectants work best on items that are already clean, so clean the item first and then apply disinfectant.

Keep storage areas clean, dry and tidy. This will assist in deterring wild birds, rodents and other pests.

Clean out water troughs regularly and don't place them under trees or where birds or bats perch.

» Visitors

Managing the movement of visitors on your property is one way of preventing pests and diseases spreading onto your property. Some diseases, as seen recently with equine influenza, can be very easily spread from one animal to another on people's clothing, in their hair and on their vehicle.

Have a designated area for visitor parking which is well away from your shed, animal thoroughfares and paddocks.

If your visitors have had contact with other animals prior to arriving on your property, ask them to wash their hands before patting or working on your animals. This is particularly important with vets, farriers and other livestock service providers. Ensure they wear clean clothes and boots, or supply some for them to wear on your farm. Where possible, use your vehicle to move around the property.



» Quarantine new animals

Livestock and birds that are new to your property should be quarantined for at least one week before they are introduced to your existing flock or herd. This will allow most disease symptoms to show before possibly infecting the remainder of your herd or flock. Whilst in quarantine animals should be treated (including vaccination if appropriate) to ensure that they have the same health status as your herd or flock.

Quarantine is a period of isolation, so a paddock or a yard that does not directly adjoin paddocks holding livestock should be used. In regards to poultry, a separate clean cage or shed should be used.

Where possible obtain a Commodity Vendor Declaration (CVD) or a By-product Vendor Declaration (BVD). (These forms are available on the Meat and Livestock Australia website).

» Keep records

Keep a detailed log of animals that are coming onto, and going off your property. This information should include where the animals have come from/ going to, transport dates and details of any identification markings or tags.

These records can greatly assist if there is an emergency animal disease outbreak in your area, so animal movements can be rapidly traced, and the disease contained.

If you employ itinerant workers on your farm, keep a record of when they arrive, when they leave and their contact details (such as a mobile phone number). This can also assist agricultural authorities during an emergency response.



» Buffer zone

Where possible, create a 'buffer zone' between you and your neighbours through measures such as double fencing and wind breaks.

» Feral animals and wild birds

Feral pest animals (such as foxes, wild dogs and cats) are known for attacking livestock, causing losses and injuries. The spread of pests and disease by feral animals is a major biosecurity risk. Where possible, don't allow your stock to mix with feral animals.

For poultry and other birds you should adopt measures that will keep wild birds away from your domestic birds. Netting over your chook run and protection of their water supply are highly recommended.

Feed and water should be positioned so that it's not open to attracting wild birds. Water supplied from dams should be treated before offering it to your birds.



» Know what to look for in livestock

You know your animal well enough to know if something is wrong. Common signs of a sick animal can include:

- sores or ulcers
- excessive dribbling from the mouth
- diarrhoea—especially with blood
- large discharges from any orifice such as the nose
- not eating properly or off their feed
- dramatic decreases in production such as milk from cows or eggs from chickens
- non-responsive animals
- staggering or head drooping
- severe lameness
- swellings
- swollen heads
- inability to rise
- increased body temperature
- unexplained deaths.





Birds and Poultry

» Keep it clean and quarantined

Many small landholders keep various types of poultry and you should be aware that avian influenza or 'bird flu' and other diseases including Newcastle Disease, remain a threat to Australian birds.

Bird owners have a vital role in preventing disease outbreaks and can adopt these simple steps:

- keep your equipment and poultry yard or aviary clean
- avoid contact between your birds and wild birds
- don't let feed and water become contaminated by droppings or other animal waste
- ensure all drinking water for your birds is chlorinated
- if you go to bird shows don't allow your bird to mix directly with others
- practise good personal hygiene after handling birds
- limit visitors to your birds
- keep new birds separated before introducing them your existing flock.

All bird owners need to remain vigilant for signs of disease.



» Know what to look for in birds and poultry

- swollen heads
- a drop in egg production
- difficulty breathing
- diarrhoea
- reluctance to move, eat or drink, droopy appearance
- inability to walk or stand
- unusual head or neck posture
- lethargy
- sudden death in several birds.

All birds can be susceptible to avian influenza and it has been shown to occur in more than 100 species including chickens, turkeys, pheasants, partridges, quail, ducks, geese, guinea fowl, ostriches and many wild birds.

For more information visit www.daff.gov.au/birds

» Report it

Veterinary attention should be sought for sick livestock and birds. Importantly, if you think your stock or birds are showing signs of an exotic disease you must report this to your vet or the **Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline** on **1800 675 888**. This will put you in touch with your state or territory department of primary industries or agriculture for advice on the most appropriate course of action.

If you suspect a disease, isolate sick animals and do not visit neighbouring farms until the cause has been determined—this limits its chance of spreading.



Plant Health

» Keep it clean

Wash your hands with soapy water before and after handling plants and seeds. This is particularly important if you are dealing with plant material or soil that you suspect could be contaminated by a pest, disease or weed seeds.

Keeping farm equipment clean is also important. Do not bring agricultural equipment onto your property without ensuring it is clean and free of soil, seeds and other contaminants.

In addition, the equipment that you use on plants and crops should be clean and disinfected before using it on a different plantation or crop.

It is important to remember that you need to thoroughly clean an item before it will be satisfactorily disinfected.





» Visitors

Managing the movement of visitors on your property is one way of preventing pests, disease and weeds spreading onto your property. Some diseases, as seen recently with equine influenza, can be very easily spread from one area to another on people's clothing, in their hair and on vehicles. Shoes pose a major risk as they can carry dirt containing weed seeds and other plant material.

Have a designated area for visitor parking which is well away from your shed, plants and crops.

If your visitors have been in contact with someone else's plants or crop prior to arriving on your property, ask them to wash their hands before handling your plants. This is particularly important with travelling (itinerant) workers and other service providers.

» Keep a record

Keep a simple log of who is coming onto your property. Details you should consider recording are: date of arrival and departure; where they came from before working on your property; and possibly where they intend to go to next. Contact details such as a mobile phone number are also important. This information is crucial during a pest or disease incursion and can significantly improve the chances of containment and eradication.



» Buffer zone

Where possible, create a buffer zone with your neighbours through measures such as double fencing and wind breaks.

» Know what to look for

Check the origin of material coming on or going off your property to assess it for the risk of disease or insects.

Plant symptoms to keep an eye out for include:

- plant death
- die-back of shoot-tips
- failure of plants to thrive such as a reduction in growth or low production
- low germination rates
- yellow, black, brown or orange spots on leaves
- unusual markings or colouration on leaves or fruit
- leaf curling
- new weeds.

Use certified 'free from pests' seed or propagation material and use trusted suppliers.



» Report it

The production of crops to supply domestic and overseas markets is a multi-billion dollar industry to Australia and vital to our economy. In 2007–08 the value of Australia's plant industries were worth around \$20 billion to our economy. For this reason it is crucial that Australia's plants and crops are protected and remain free of weeds, pests and diseases.

The early detection and containment of a weed, pest or disease is essential to prevent its spread and assists in the eradication efforts by agriculture authorities. It could help save an entire industry.

Report the suspect weed, pest or disease—telephone the **Exotic Plant Pest Hotline** on **1800 084 881**. This will put you in touch with your state or territory department of primary industries or agriculture for advice on the most appropriate course of action.







***further** information*

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry website **www.daff.gov.au/biosecurity**

Biosecurity information for rural landholders
www.farmbiosecurity.com.au

Major pest and disease outbreak information
www.outbreak.gov.au

Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline **1800 675 888**

Exotic Plant Pest Hotline **1800 084 881**