

Biosecurity Fact Sheet:

Good livestock farming practices make good sense.

Livestock disease can be catastrophic for farmers and the farming industry through the loss of income and the loss of markets.

Following good livestock farming practices is the best and simplest way to achieving biosecurity – to protect your stock, your profits and your industry.

Q What is biosecurity?

A Biosecurity refers to various management practices that reduce the risk of introducing disease onto your farm. You can protect the future of your farm, and also the wider livestock industry, by recognising the importance of biosecurity in the day-to-day running of your property.

It is in your best interest to ensure that all potential risks are identified and managed. The likelihood of animal diseases occurring can be reduced by conducting routine careful inspections and implementing procedures for isolating new animals and managing visitors, fence maintenance and feral animal control as well as developing a general animal health program.

Q What is a biosecurity plan?

A A biosecurity plan is essentially a set of commonsense principles that you recognise and consider in the daily operations of your property. It is not onerous nor bureaucratic, but is essentially good management practice. The check-list of potential risks (overleaf) is a useful starting point. In addition, your industry association will be able to provide an example of a simple biosecurity plan.

Q How will reporting suspicious signs of disease help me?

A If you see signs of a new or suspicious disease in your stock, it is possible that other animals could be incubating the disease, and control measures should be implemented as quickly as possible to prevent costly losses.

Your report will be taken seriously and the appropriate resources will be applied to investigate the disease - how it got into your stock and how to prevent its spread. Limiting the spread of the disease will save you time and money, and may well protect your industry as a whole.

It is in your interest to promptly report any unusual signs or unexpected deaths in your stock. Failure to do so could result in penalties – and certainly wouldn't be appreciated by your neighbours and others in your industry.

Q Australia has strict quarantine requirements at airports etc. – isn't that enough protection?

A While Australia has enjoyed a marketing advantage because of our freedom from many harmful diseases, we can't assume that this will always be the case. With people, animals and products moving around the world so rapidly, there is an increasing risk of foreign diseases being introduced. This means Australia's quarantine barriers are under increasing pressure, requiring everyone to be vigilant about the threat of disease.

Within Australia, various movement controls also aim to reduce the spread of animal diseases. However, the first and most effective protection for your property and livestock is your own biosecurity plan that identifies and deals with the major risks.

Q Why not just ban all imports of agricultural products?

A Australia is the world's biggest exporter of agricultural products and livestock. Unlike many of our trading partners, the economic health of our agricultural sector relies heavily on export income. Accordingly, Australia has a firm commitment to break down trade barriers and unjustified bans on imports. Banning imports to Australia would seriously damage our ability to export and have disastrous effects.

The best way to reduce disease risks is for all livestock producers to take individual and collective responsibility to protect their industry by implementing appropriate biosecurity arrangements.



Spot the risks on your farm

Use these simple guidelines to help you identify and manage risks.
As you can see – good livestock farming practices make good biosecurity sense.

RISK	MANAGEMENT PRACTICE
Introduction and Movement of Stock	
Introduction of new stock	Only purchase replacement stock from trusted sources
	Insist on a NVD/health declaration and treatment history
	Isolate and observe purchased stock for at least a week
	Obtain advice from your vet on an appropriate animal health program for new stock
Uncontrolled movement of stock	Maintain boundary fences
	Regularly inspect stock for health issues
Vehicles & Visitors	
Entry of contaminated vehicles and machinery	Clean and disinfect any borrowed farm machinery or equipment
	Prevent visitor vehicles from entering paddocks or yards
Contamination from people and working animals	Restrict visitors to a designated general area before allowing onto property
	Ensure visitors and their animals are clean before entering the property and having contact with stock
Contamination from husbandry equipment	Do not share injecting or drenching equipment
Feral Animals & Pests	
Pests and feral animals mixing with your stock	Develop a pest and feral animal control program
	Work with your neighbours to control feral animals
	Minimise feral animal attractants such as rubbish dumps, carcase disposal sites, stockfeed waste
Feed & Water	
Introduction of stockfeed and water	Only purchase stockfeed from trusted and quality sources
	Where possible obtain a Commodity Vendor Declaration (CVD) or a By-product Vendor Declaration (BVD)
Storage of stockfeed and water	Keep storage areas clean, dry and tidy
	Regularly clean out water troughs

If you spot anything unusual in your stock, immediately call your veterinarian, stock inspector or the Emergency Disease Watch Hotline on **1800 675 888**.

Look. Check. Ask a Vet.