

Biosecurity on the farm

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Animal Health Unit

Biosecurity in Yukon

As a Yukon farmer, practicing good biosecurity enhances the health of your animals, productivity of your farm and safety of local Yukon food. You can use the Government of Yukon's Veterinary Services Program funding to bring a veterinarian to your farm to help review your biosecurity practices. The Yukon farm biosecurity checklist can also be used to further assess biosecurity on your farm.

What is biosecurity?

Biosecurity is about separating your animals from anyone or anything that could carry disease. Biosecurity reduces the chance of a disease being carried onto and off your property by people, animals, equipment or vehicles.

What is a biosecurity plan?

A biosecurity plan includes steps to prevent, reduce and eliminate the introduction and spread of disease onto and from your farm. A biosecurity plan should address three key areas:

- animal health;
- farm operations; and
- access to the farm.

A veterinarian can help you develop a biosecurity plan during a herd/flock health visit.

Why is biosecurity important?

Effective biosecurity practices help to protect:

- health of your animals;
- human health, including your family, employees and the public;
- farm profitability; and
- the environment.

Who is involved in biosecurity?

A biosecurity plan is most effective when all people visiting your farm are aware of the proper steps. People that are in contact with your animals or equipment are especially important when it comes to maintaining biosecurity. Common examples include:

- farmers, their family and farm employees;
- veterinarians;
- farm visitors; and
- delivery persons (i.e., feed suppliers).



Contact

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Veterinary Services Program

As part of the Yukon Livestock Health Program, the Veterinary Services Program provides up to \$1,000 per farm premise to cover the fees charged by a veterinarian to travel to/from your farm, for their professional services, and for phone consultations. Livestock owners are encouraged to register by contacting the Animal Health Unit.

How can I improve biosecurity on my farm?

Many biosecurity practices are simple and likely already in place on your farm. Examples of some biosecurity measures for each area are listed below.

- Access to the farm
 - Keep a visitor log book.
 - Keep a record of new animals, date of arrival and their source.
 - Limit sharing of equipment between farms.
 - Keep a log of equipment movement and farm deliveries.
 - Ensure appropriate clothing and hand-washing by farm workers and visitors.
- Animal health
 - Purchase new animals from a healthy herd.
 - Quarantine new and sick animals for at least two weeks (ideally four weeks).
 - Discuss appropriate vaccine and parasite control for your animals with a veterinarian.
 - Observe your animals daily to monitor health.
 - Establish a flock or herd health plan with a veterinarian, including disease-response plans.
- Farm operations
 - Completely empty and disinfect pens or stalls between batches of animals.
 - Schedule regular cleaning of:
 - buildings;
 - equipment;
 - farm vehicles; and
 - feed and water containers.
 - Quickly remove and dispose of dead animals away from live animals.
 - Handle and manage manure according to territorial and municipal guidelines.
 - Control wildlife and pests on your farm and in animal houses.
 - Maintain your property, buildings and fences in good condition.
 - Purchase feed, bedding, equipment and other supplies from a reputable source.
 - Keep an updated biosecurity and training plan for farm workers.

Biosecurity Checklists

A biosecurity checklist is a good method for assessing and improving on-farm biosecurity. You can complete the checklist and make improvements on your own. However, it is even more valuable to complete or review the checklist with a veterinarian during a flock/herd health visit.

Biosecurity checklists for Yukon farms are available online at www.env.gov.yk.ca and in print from the Animal Health Unit.

How to purchase healthy animals?

- Obtain new animals from a single herd if possible.
- Ask questions about the health history of the herd.
- Perform a pre-purchase exam.
- Buy animals that are tested for or vaccinated against common diseases.

For more information on purchasing healthy animals see the Yukon Swine, Cattle and Poultry health handbooks.

Other resources

- Order free Yukon biosecurity signage, a visitor log book, and livestock health handbooks from the Animal Health Unit.
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency: Animal Health Starts on the Farm – basic principles for protecting animal health on Canada's farms
www.inspection.gc.ca/biosecurity.
- Ontario Livestock and Poultry Council – Livestock On-Farm Biosecurity Information Guide
http://www.ontlpc.ca/pdfs/downloads/olpc-livestock_web.pdf.