

BEST PRACTICE MANAGEMENT GUIDE

BIOSECURITY

Protecting the livestock industry against disease

The Government and Livestock Industry Cost Sharing Deed of Agreement in respect to emergency animal disease responses (EADRA) require Australian commodity groups to develop biosecurity plans. Biosecurity plans protect the economy, the environment, and human health from negative impacts associated with the entry, establishment or spread of animal or plant pests and disease, or invasive plant and animal species. Whilst Agents are not signatories to the EADRA, Agents may be held directly responsible for the spread of diseases/pests. Agents can assist industry to understand and act responsibly by promoting the practical tips outlined in this guide.

As ALPA members work with vendors who handle various species of livestock, ALPA supports the industry measures being put in place to mitigate the risk of an exotic/infectious (emergency) disease entering any area of the supply chain, in particular where agents work – on farm and at saleyards. Agents are a potential risk in the spread of livestock diseases and agricultural pests for reasons that will be outlined. Agents understand that the whole of supply chain nationally has a responsibility to be aware of risks and implement practical preventative measures associated with managing biosecurity.

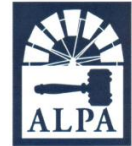
The ALPA Biosecurity Guide outlines elements of best management practice that should be followed wherever possible and practicable to protect livestock operations against the likelihood of an exotic/infectious (emergency) disease or plant pest/disease entering into and spreading through the livestock population or region.

By implementing the measures outlined in this biosecurity guide, Agents will ensure they are assisting in reducing the likelihood of entry of (spread of) a disease/pests at their place of business; be it the vendor's farm, saleyard or other areas of business (abattoir) that would potentially impact the whole livestock industry. This will reduce the industries liability.

It is recognised that many of the practices detailed are currently undertaken, in part or in whole, by Agents and other areas of the supply chain as being elements of best management practice. It is also recognised that the management practices employed will vary from saleyard to saleyard and farm to farm, dependent on variables such as the type of livestock enterprise, the size of the operation, the structure and management of the physical facilities and operational management considerations.

In the event of an incursion of an exotic/infectious (emergency) disease, AUSVETPLAN becomes the operating document for the period of the outbreak. All members should familiarise themselves with this Plan which is available from Animal Health Australia's website (www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au).

The ALPA Biosecurity Guide outlines the practical steps Agents and their clients (also saleyard operators) can take to help reduce the risk and reduce the spread of infectious disease and most importantly protect the future of our livestock industry.



SALEYARDS

REDUCE THE RISK *OF INTRODUCING DISEASE*

The saleyard environment does not allow for easy disease control. An agent or saleyard operator can only implement a small number of practices that will reduce the likelihood of introducing disease. *It is important to note that biosecurity procedures should not be costly to implement and should not impact greatly on the operation of the saleyard.*

Stock:

- Assess the health status of animals entering a saleyard and ensure their identification can be cross-referenced to the property of origin for trace back purposes. For those deemed unacceptable do not mix with other stock and either isolate them or place them back on the truck for return to the owner.
- Insist on a valid (properly completed and current) vendor declaration (e.g. NVD) and animal health statement. Query if not acceptable or unable to obtain. Do not complete one on their behalf.
- Be aware of animals showing signs of sickness or injury. Any animal that looks suspicious should be isolated. Seek advice immediately for treatment.
- Maintain records of all stock entering the saleyard. This will include; the "from PIC", number of head, etc.
- Correlate the destination of all stock (including cash sales) to the relevant paper work and supply copies to the buyer as soon as practicable. This could take the form of a post sale summary.
- *Remind your clients to:*
 - *not send sick or injured stock to the saleyard as they will be returned,*
 - *provide a completed, current national vendor declaration and animal health statement with the stock being sent for sale,*
 - *ensure all stock being sent for sale are identified in line with state legislation,*
 - *quarantine/isolate all new stock entering their property for at least 10 days.*

Vehicle & People Movements:

- Be aware of the potential for the spread of pests and weeds at saleyards by visitors, vehicles, (especially livestock transporters), fodder and workers. Not only animal diseases but potentially human diseases also e.g. Q Fever etc. Be aware of the spread of weeds and burrs.

Stock Feed:

- For stock at saleyards requiring feed. Do not feed any meat and bone meal to ruminant animals – or suspect feed. All feeds fed should have a Commodity Vendor Declaration.
- Check there is no contamination of the stock feed by vermin, seeds, burr, moulds etc through visual appraisal.

Boundaries & Fences:

- Ensure boundaries are adequate and maintained.

Feral Animals & Wildlife:

- Be aware of rubbish dumps and placement of disposal areas that may; attract feral or wild animals into a saleyard area or cause contamination e.g. old batteries.
- Saleyards should have measures in place for controlling feral animals and rodents.



SALEYARDS

REDUCE THE RISK *OF SPREADING DISEASE*

An agent or saleyard operator can only implement a small number of practices that will ensure diseases are not spread between the different groups of stock. Implementing these simple measures can reduce the risk of spreading a disease.

Maintain Good Health & Hygiene Practices:

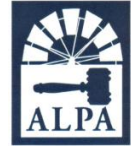
- Ensure that all your staff involved in the handling of animals are aware of the importance of good health & hygiene practices and are vaccinated against diseases such as Q Fever. Likewise encourage your clients to educate their staff on farm.

Dead Animal Management:

- Work with your selling centre to develop a management plan for disposal and reporting of dead animals at the saleyard. Reporting suspect deaths of animals could save the industry.
- Where possible, dispose of carcasses in a segregated area and taking into account environmental and public considerations.
- If carcasses are sent to the knackery, you should notify either your veterinarian or local state government department or contact 1800 675 888 Disease Watch hotline.
- Cover dead animals as soon as possible to eliminate potential problems with feral animal activity and flies.

Effluent, Water & Soft Floors:

- Be aware that effective effluent containment management systems in saleyards can minimise the spread of disease.
- Manage soft flooring disposal appropriately to reduce the risk of disease, pest and weed dispersal. Keep records of where material has gone offsite.



ON-FARM

REDUCE THE RISK *OF INTRODUCING DISEASE*

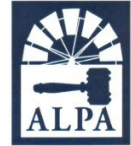
Be aware of your actions as they may assist in the spread of disease/pests and weeds. Always follow the biosecurity protocols being implemented on site. If not clear ASK! REMEMBER: You are liable for your actions.

Stock Purchases:

- Wherever practical, Agents purchasing stock on behalf of a client, or advising clients should always buy from reputable and biosecurity-conscious suppliers, and preferably from suppliers who maintain a quality assurance program (e.g. LPA, Dairy QA) which ideally includes a biosecurity component. LPA registered producers can't buy livestock from a non LPA registered producer/property.
Remind your clients to:
 - *Do the same when purchasing stock*
- Wherever possible, Agents and buyers should inspect animals prior to purchase to assess their health status visually.
Remind your clients to:
 - *Inspect all new stock entering the property at unloading for sickness/injuries.*
 - *Hold any animals entering their farm from any outside property - for a nominated on farm surveillance period in isolation from the rest of the animals on their property until satisfied of the health/disease status. - To ensure their fences are adequate to maintain that newly arrived animals are kept separate from other animals on the property. This includes stud stock and agistment stock.*
- Insist on the supply of a national vendor declaration (NVD) and Animal Health Statement. This will state the property of origin, the health status and treatment history of the stock – ensure it is completed correctly and query if not.
Remind your clients to:
 - *Keep this documentation in accordance with state legislation.*
- Ensure stock identification can be cross-referenced to the property of origin for trace back purposes.
Remind your clients to:
 - *Keep the NVD and Animal Health Statement for seven years.*
- Ensure that all stock are identified in accordance with state legislation before leaving the property of sale.
Remind your clients to:
 - *Check that all stock are properly identified.*
- When drafting stock any animals that look sick or are injured should be segregated. Seek advice immediately for treatment.
Remind your clients to:
 - *Regularly check their stock for injury or illness.*

Vehicle & People Movements:

- Be aware of the potential as an agent to contaminate and spread diseases on farm from diseases being carried on clothing, boots, vehicles, etc. Not only disease to animals, but to humans (e.g. Q Fever, etc). Be aware of the spread of weeds and burrs. Ensure you are wearing clean clothes and footwear before entering the property.
Remind your clients to:
 - *Be aware of the potential for property contamination of their farm by all visitors (from visitors, vehicles, machinery and equipment, e.g. tankers/transporters, veterinarians, other producers, fodder and workers) and imports.*
- *Ensure there is routine cleaning of visitor's boots, clothes and hands.*
- Where possible, you should restrict your movement on-farm to just the reason you are there.
- Park your vehicle in a designated parking area and utilise on-farm transport.
Remind your clients to:
 - *Reduce unnecessary movement of people and non-property owned vehicles over the property, at the saleyard or clearing sale site. Remember that people, animals, clothing, fodder can carry and spread disease & weeds.*



ON-FARM

Vehicle & People Movements continued...:

Remind your clients to:

- Where there is regular movement of vehicles and people at a property (e.g. transporters, vets, workers, contractors, buyers, clearing sales, etc) ensure where possible, their vehicles, machinery and equipment are directed to a defined area of the property.

Remind your clients to:

- Have a dedicated parking area for visitors that is away from livestock and crops.

- Limit the movement of non-farm personal, vehicles, machinery and equipment, beyond the defined areas of the property where possible
- Where movement of vehicles, machinery and equipment is necessary outside the defined areas (e.g. property or clearing sale inspections) ensure the equipment has been cleaned to minimise disease and weed spread from another property.

Stock Feed:

- When purchasing feed for clients ensure it is fit for purpose. All feed should have a Commodity Vendor Declaration. When feeding ruminants make sure the feed does not contain restricted animal material.

Remind your client to:

- Not feed any Restricted Animal Material (RAM) e.g. meat and bone meal.

or suspect feed to animals. If the producer is substituting feeds, they should check with their stock feed supplier as to any possible residue and withholding requirements prior to the sale of those livestock for slaughter.

- Check there is no contamination of the stock feed by vermin, seeds, burr, chemicals, etc through visual appraisal.

Boundaries & Fences:

Remind your clients to:

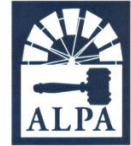
- Ensure boundaries are adequate and maintained to prevent inappropriate movement of livestock e.g. sheep break through neighbour fence.

Feral Animals & Wildlife:

Remind your clients to:

- Not encourage feral animals and rodents in any way e.g. open barn, silos, and manage waste disposal.

- Be aware of rubbish dumps and placement of disposal areas that may attract feral and wild animals into a saleyard area or onto a property. Rubbish dumps could also cause contamination e.g. old batteries and chemical drums.



ON-FARM

REDUCE THE RISK *OF SPREADING DISEASE*

Regularly Monitor & Investigate Animal Illness / Death:

- During visits to client properties or at saleyards, be aware of animals showing signs of sickness – this includes working dogs.
- Encourage clients, staff and transporters to report cases of unexplained sickness or death to a veterinarian or local government authority as soon as possible.
1800 675 888 Disease Watch Hotline.
- Encourage clients to remove and isolate sick animals from all other animals.

Remind your clients to:

- *Ensure that all staff involved in the daily monitoring and handling of animals are aware of the importance of early detection of exotic/infectious (emergency) disease.*
- *Ensure they know what to do if they suspect an animal may be exhibiting signs of such a disease.*

Maintain Good Health & Hygiene Practices:

- Ensure that all of your staff involved in the handling of animals are aware of the importance of good health & hygiene practices and are vaccinated against diseases such as Q Fever.

Remind your clients to:

- *Encourage your clients to educate their staff on farm.*

Dead Animal Management:

Remind your clients to:

- *Dispose of carcasses in a contained, segregated area and taking into account environmental and public considerations. If sent to the knackery, the vendor should notify either their veterinarian or their state government department.*

- *Cover dead animals placed in a pit as soon as possible to eliminate potential problems with feral animal activity and flies. If you are aware the client has had a death/s, recommend they seek advice prior to sending further stock to any selling centre or off their property.*

1800 675 888 Watch Disease Hotline.

Effluent, Water & Soft Floors:

Remind your clients to:

- *Be aware that effective effluent containment management systems in saleyards can minimise the spread of disease.*

- *Be aware that incorrect effluent use on farm or any livestock location can lead to disease spread.*

Manage soft flooring disposal.

Remember that we all have a biosecurity role to play in keeping our industry disease free.

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