

Biosecurity: Keep the diseases out

Biosecurity involves management practices put in place to prevent introduction or limit the spread of disease within your farm.

Infectious diseases are introduced on farms through:

- Stocking sick or carrier animals
- Visitors' and farmers clothing, shoes and vehicles
- Poor disposal of dead animals' carcasses and litter
- Contaminated feed and water provided to the animals
- Rodents such as rats, lizards, wild birds And stray birds such as pigeons
- Contaminated equipments and machines
- Farmer's pets
- Airborne infections from close farms
- Insects that serve as vectors of many diseases

For an effective biosecurity plan, there are three aspects that should be considered: Isolation, Human traffic control and sanitation.

Isolation

This involves confining the animals in a secure environment and keeping all other animals out. And it involves :

- Construction of fences- this restricts movement in and out of your farm
- Practising all-in-all-out (poultry) system . That is rear your animals until slaughter before stocking a new set.
- Purchasing your stock from a reliable source
- Keeping birds of same species and age group together: Some birds are resistant or carriers of diseases that are harmful to other birds of a different species.

- Keeping rodents and wild birds away by placing wire nets
- Also ensuring there are no dams near the farm house as this attracts water birds
- Clearing the surroundings of bushes and shrubs as these provide hiding areas for rodents and other wild animals.
- Monitor livestock regularly and investigate disease outbreaks and deaths. Remove and isolate sick animals.
- Report cases of unusual sickness or death to a veterinarian.
- Record the number of deaths to identify significant increases.

Traffic control

- Visitor's vehicles can contaminate property. Limit the movement of non-property vehicles
- Manure from infected animals can spread diseases. Be vigilant with livestock transport
- Know who and what comes and goes from your farm. Have a single access (entry) point
- Contractors' equipments can spread diseases. Encourage use of protective clothing and washing of hands and shoes.

Sanitation

- The animal house should be kept clean to ensure that there is no spread of diseases.
- litter should be dry at all times as wet and dirty litter predisposes to coccidiosis (birds) and other infections.
- Wash hands thoroughly and change clothes after handling sick animals.
- Visitors should have their cars disinfected and their shoes too at the entrance to the farm.
- Everyone should wash their hands with a disinfectant and wear protective clothing on the farm.
- There should be a footbath at the entrance of every animal house that all visitors should dip their foot wear.

There are different disinfecting products that can be used by farmers: Phenols, Hypochlorites, Quaternary ammonium, Formalin and Chlorhexidine among others. It is important to seek advice from a veterinarian on which disinfectant is best suited for your production needs.

The other important way to prevent entry of diseases into the farms is through vaccinations. Vaccines aid in providing your birds with a strong immune system that is able to resist infections. Never vaccinate sick birds.

Always keep records as this is an essential tool in ensuring good biosecurity measures have been attained.

It is also important to note that healthy birds that are free from stress will develop an active immune system that protects them from diseases.

How Can [Farm Grid](#) Help

- contact us for a biosecurity plan specific to your farm
- follow us on facebook for regular updates [Facebook page](#)