

# Property Biosecurity Management Plan

# Reference guide v1.0

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# What is a Property Biosecurity Management Plan?

A biosecurity management plan is a practical way of showing how you are preventing the introduction of pests, disease, weeds and contaminants to your property, spreading around your property, or spreading from your property.

# Why have a Property Biosecurity Management Plan?

Your biosecurity management plan:

* Defines your responsibilities
* Outlines your emergency disease protocols
* Supports governments during an emergency animal disease response by ensuring all property biosecurity information is accessible
* Act as a communications opportunity between livestock owners, essential service providers and others that are legally allowed to access the property to ensure biosecurity procedures are being met.

Limits of your Biosecurity Management Plan

A biosecurity management plan is not designed to be used to restrict access to people that have a legal right to enter your property, such as essential service providers (i.e. gas, water, energy or telecommunication providers) or emergency service personnel such as police, fire or ambulance.

Essential services have a right under legislation to access your property to access their infrastructure. Emergency services may also need to access your property in the event of an emergency without complying fully with your biosecurity plan.

When to update your biosecurity plan

You should update your biosecurity management plan every 12 months or when:

* the risk to your property changes
* your management practices change
* you experience a disease pest or week outbreak on your property.

# What are the biosecurity risks to a property?

Every property is different and each faces a unique set of challenges. Broadly speaking, biosecurity risks are created when livestock, people, vehicles, equipment and supplies are brought onto a property, moved around the property, or shipped off the property. Risks may also be created during the course of your day-to-day management of your land and your livestock.

This document provides a quick-reference as to the kinds of actions which may present a biosecurity risk to your enterprise and how they can be managed. While this guide deals with the most common risks to grazing livestock enterprises, your risk assessment should also include other factors unique to your property which may result in the introduction or spread of a disease, pest, weed or other contaminant.

# Livestock

## Livestock movements

### Moving livestock onto your property

New livestock are the biggest risk for introducing diseases, pests and weeds.

This could occur when:

* Bringing on new purchases
* Stray livestock are on your property, or are being returned after straying
* Livestock return home from an event, agistment or show.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Checking requirements for moving livestock in your state or territory
* Purchasing from sellers who are part of a quality assurance program or disease accreditation programs
* Requesting an Animal Health Declaration from the seller
* Keeping Declarations and movement documents records on file
* Isolating livestock in a holding paddock
* Monitoring livestock for \_\_\_\_\_days (28 days recommended) for diseases and parasites
* Vaccinating, treating and drenching new arrivals as needed

### Moving livestock from your property

Livestock leaving your property can spread diseases, pests and weeds present on your property to their next destination.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Ensuring all animals are fit to load
* Supplying purchasers with appropriate movement documents
* Use an accredited transporter and inspect all animals prior to loading

## Livestock diseases

### Endemic diseases

Many livestock diseases are endemic in Australian herds and flocks.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Being familiar with common signs of diseases in your area
* Knowing how these diseases spread
* Identifying and isolating sick animals, where practical
* Treating sick animals and seeking help if necessary
* Implementing vaccination and drenching programs
* Ensuring all equipment used for animal husbandry is cleaned / disinfected between uses
* Keeping treatment records

### Exotic or Notifiable diseases

Exotic diseases are diseases that are not found in Australia. Notifiable diseases are diseases that are not normally found in your state and have mandatory reporting requirements.

These diseases can seriously impact on animal health and trade markets.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Ensure unusual signs of disease are reported to either a local veterinarian, state government or the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline 1800 675 888
* Ensure you have an EAD Action plan in place on your property

### Zoonotic diseases

Some livestock diseases can infect people who work in close contact with animals, and vice versa.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Ensuring you or your staff know the signs of common zoonotic disease
* Ensuring all staff are vaccinated for preventable zoonotic diseases (e.g. Q-Fever)
* Wearing practical PPE when handling animals (e.g. long sleeve shirt, boots, hat, sunglasses).
* Covering wounds with watertight dressings when handling livestock.
* Practicing good hygiene at all times when handling livestock

## Management practices

### Daily activities

Biosecurity risks can present themselves during your day-to-day management of your property.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Inspecting livestock and infrastructure regularly
* Increasing the frequency of inspections when risks are higher, e.g.:
  + When calving / lambing / kidding
  + Following significant rainfall
  + After a natural disaster
* Ensuring staff and trained and prepared to recognise and respond to risks
* Having an emergency disease action plan

### Animal welfare

Poor animal welfare can reduce production, including lowering reproduction rates. It can also place undue stress or suffering on livestock and make stock more susceptible to disease.

Poor practices may also breach your state or territory animal welfare legislation.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Building and maintaining yards to reduce the risk of injury to livestock
* Checking yards and handling equipment (e.g. crushes, weighing/drafting equipment) before use for any potential hazards that could injure livestock
* Isolating, assessing and treating injured livestock as soon as possible
* Having a clear understanding and keeping a copy of the most recent version of the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for the species you have on your property
* Ensuring staff are familiar with relevant welfare legislation and Standards and Guidelines

### Treating animals

Animal treatments not used responsibly may cause physical harm to the livestock or cause the meat of that animal to contain a high chemical residue.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Following directions when administering animal treatments
* Storing treatments as per label instructions in a secure location
* Ensuring all equipment used to administer treatments is in working order and clean after use
* Observing withholding periods and export slaughter intervals
* Record treatments accurately on movement records (NVD’s)
* Permanently identify animals that have been exposed to hormone growth promotants (HGP) or physical contaminants (e.g. broken needles)

### Chemical use

Livestock exposed to chemicals may become unwell or contain unacceptably high chemical residues at the time of slaughter. This may compromise food safety and harm the reputation of Australian livestock products.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Following the label directions when applying and storing chemicals
* Observing withholding periods when chemicals are used
* Being aware of spray drift
* Keeping treatment records

# Farm Supplies

## Purchasing feed

Animal feeds pose a biosecurity risk as they are a direct input for livestock production.

Raw stock feeds such as hay and grain may contain:

* Weeds or weed seeds
* Chemicals or other contaminants
* Small animal carcasses

Commercial stock feeds are feeds for livestock. There are national programs in place around what stock feeds can be fed to certain species of livestock.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Purchasing stock feed from trusted suppliers who can provide assurances and documentation (such as Commodity Vendor Declarations)
* Requesting a Fodder Vendor Declaration when buying fodder
* Making enquiries about what chemicals have been applied to fodder and what weeds might be present
* Inspecting stock feed on delivery for evidence of pests, damage and contaminants
* Storing stock feed to prevent contamination

## Feed management practices

### Feeding livestock

Hay and grain may contain weed seeds that can be spread by feeding to livestock. Areas where livestock feed, such as troughs, can also become contaminated by manure, which poses a disease risk.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Cleaning feed troughs regularly
* Monitoring feeding sites for germination of weeds
* Feeding hay to livestock in ways that prevent spoiling and reduce spreading weeds

### Feed storage

Poor feed storage encourages pests and diseases which may contaminate feed or reduce its shelf life. Old feed can harbour disease organisms, fungal spores and pests that may be harmful to your livestock.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Keeping feed in a clean, dry storage area
* Keeping feed stores covered to prevent feed from becoming wet and mouldy.
* Regularly inspecting feed supplies to ensure they remain secured and fit-for-purpose
* Disposing of old or contaminated feed safely

### Persistent chemicals

Livestock may ingest persistent chemicals which can result in death or high residues in their meat. Persistent chemicals maybe in sites like:

* Old dip yards where chemicals have splashed onto the ground
* Older timber structures where chemicals may have been used to treat timber (old stock yards, power poles, rail way lines, farm building)
* Chemical storage sheds
* Machinery
* Lead painted buildings
* Old property dumps

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Recording high risk sites on your property by mapping them.
* Fencing off high risk areas to prevent access by livestock
* Where old infrastructure such as power poles exist on the property, contacting your essential service provider to request a treatment description for the assets on your property
* Contacting a local private veterinarian or relevant state / territory animal health authority immediately if you suspect livestock have consumed persistent chemicals

### Restricted Animal Material (RAM)

Certain stock feed can contain RAM. Feeding RAM to ruminants is illegal in Australia due to the risk of introducing bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or ’mad cow disease’).

It is important that you identify any products that contain RAM (e.g. feeds, fertilisers, etc.) that you may use on the property and ensure ruminants cannot access these products.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Identifying RAM products stored on your property. Feeds containing RAM will have a warning on their bag
* Storing stock feed so that contamination by livestock, vermin, feral and domestic animals is minimised.
* Ensuring that ruminants do not have access to pastures fertilised with RAM for a minimum of three weeks
* Ensuring people feeding animals are aware of the Ruminant Feed Ban Program and their responsibilities. Consult the Restricted Animal Material Checklist

### Swill feeding

Swill feeding has been banned in Australia due to its high likelihood of introducing or amplifying diseases such as foot and mouth disease (FMD).

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Not feeding swill to pigs on your property.
* Ensuring all staff are aware of the Swill Feeding Ban

## Water

Water can transport and harbour disease, contaminants and weed seeds. Some disease-causing organisms can survive for long periods in water.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Ensuring the quantity and quality of water provided is suitable for the type of livestock.
* Conducting regular testing of water sources, particularly salinity during times of drought.
* Reading water requirement guidelines for livestock.
* Regularly cleaning toughs and disinfecting if required
* Monitoring water sources (e.g. river banks) for weeds and rubbish

## Other farm supplies

### Bringing in supplies

Supplies such as fertilisers, soil, organic material, animal bedding and environmental waste (fill) can also spread diseases, pests and weeds.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Asking for quality certificates or vendor declarations when purchasing products
* Inspecting products on arrival to ensure they are pest and disease free

### Outgoing supplies

Outgoing hay or grain, fertilisers, soil, organic material, animal bedding and environmental waste (fill) may spread diseases, pests and weeds to other properties.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Providing vendor declarations for any produce leaving your property
* Disposing of property waste in a responsible manner

# Waste management

## Carcass management

Carcasses can spread diseases to other livestock.

Certain diseases such as botulism and anthrax can remain in / on the carcass and be a risk to other stock. Animals in areas where there has been a history of carcass chewing are at higher risk.

Carcasses also attract feral animals such as wild dogs, pigs, foxes (see *Invasive Species*).

Note that during an EAD large numbers of animals may need to be destroyed and disposed of to contain an outbreak.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

Implementing a process for carcass management and disposal via:

* Burning
* Burial in an appropriate location
* Relocating to less trafficked area, ensuring sites are segregated from other livestock and feral animals
* Landfill
* Professional disposal

## Effluent usage

Effluent includes waste removal systems, effluent ponds and grey water/septic systems.

Bacteria such as E.coli, salmonella and campylobacter can be spread through effluent and cause disease.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Ensuring controls for the potential spread of disease from effluent are in place
* Using vegetation to minimise spray drift of effluent water
* Planning for use of effluent with grazing management calendar
* Not grazing livestock on effluent soaked pasture. Allow pasture to dry and keep cattle from pasture for minimum of 21 days
* Ensuring you meet current legislative requirements and guidelines

# Invasive species

## Weeds

Weeds compete with crops and pastures and in some cases can be toxic to livestock.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Identifying and documenting current and (where possible) historical weed populations on your property and in your region
* Recording whether your intention is to eradicate or manage weeds
* Outlining your weed management programs
* Ensuring chemicals are used according to label instructions
* Keeping records of chemicals used in weed management programs
* Coordinating efforts with neighbours and other local community members

## Vertebrate pests

Vertebrate pests (including pigs, kangaroos, dogs and vermin) can cause injury or death to livestock through the introduction of disease, or through damaging infrastructure.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Monitoring and managing vermin, feral animals, and wildlife populations to prevent impact on stock
* Coordinating with neighbours and other local community members and groups to maximise the effectiveness management programs
* Fencing off rubbish dumps
* Keeping records of shooting or baiting programs

## Invertebrate pests

Invertebrate pests such as ticks and flies pose a risk to livestock by introducing disease, impacting on animal health and decreasing production.

#### Manage this risk by:

* Treating animals against invertebrate pests to reduce pest numbers and production losses
* Recording any chemicals used on animals and observe withholding periods or Export Slaughter Intervals.

# People, vehicles and equipment

## Visitors who do not handle livestock

Visitors to your property may unintentionally introduce diseases, pests and weeds via their clothing and equipment.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Where practical, using entry points to prevent visitors entering production areas
* Restricting people who do not need to handle your livestock from yards and areas where livestock are kept.
* Having an entry and exit procedure for your property which you can give to people that need to access your property
* Indicate the process for property entry via signage
* Where needed, recording the details of visitors that enter your property

## Visitors who handle livestock

Visitors who handle your livestock may unintentionally introduce disease, pests or disease. How much of a risk this poses depends on whether these visitors are regularly in contact with other stock or crops.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Encouraging the use of PPE and hygienic practices, such as washing hands before and after handling animals, changing clothes, etc.
* If people have been overseas, restrict their access for seven days from the date of their arrival
* Check with people regularly involved in animal husbandry (vets) or crop monitoring and protection to assess their biosecurity procedures when leaving other properties

## Essential services and utilities

Essential services include power companies, water services and telecommunication providers. These companies have the right to access their infrastructure under state legislation.

When dealing with essential services a risk assessment process should be carried out specific to each individual and their impact on the property.

When in doubt about the joint management of biosecurity risks, contact the service provider to discuss your options.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Where essential services require access to infrastructure on your property, contacting these organisations to discuss how to manage entry / exit
* Providing essential service personnel with a property map, including details of any active biosecurity management strategies

## Emergency services

Emergency services include fire, ambulance and police, but they can also include other service providers required to assist during an emergency.

Due to the critical nature of an emergency it is not always practical for these services to meet your biosecurity requirements therefore the best course of action is for you to assess the risk after the event by:

* Checking fences, gates and making repairs
* Monitoring the property for new diseases, pests and weeds

## Visitors’ vehicles and equipment

### Vehicles

Vehicles can spread pathogens and weeds onto your property due to their large surface area and ability to trap weed seeds and soil in things such as tyre tread, radiator grills, chassis, and debris in the interior or tray of vehicle.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Ensuring vehicles are driven on designated roads / tracks
* Monitoring these tracks for weeds
* Designating a car parking area for visitors.
* Requesting that people visiting your property use a farm vehicle for driving around the property
* Asking visitors who must use their own vehicles to follow a ‘come clean, leave clean’ procedure.
* Providing visitors with a map of the property and encouraging them not to stray off existing tracks
* Designating an area for visitors / contractors to clean down their vehicles if practical

### Equipment

Equipment such as machinery and certain tools used out in paddocks and in soil can spread weed seeds and pathogens.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Having a procedure for managing equipment as it moves to different paddocks or properties
* Inspecting and cleaning machinery and equipment before it leaves the property
* Minimising lending equipment or requesting that it be returned clean

## Property vehicles and equipment

People, vehicles and equipment used regularly on your property can still spread disease, pests and weeds from one area of the property to another.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Mapping low- and high-risk areas on your property.
* Regularly clean down property vehicles or earth working equipment when moving from high- to low-risk areas.

# Train, plan and record

## Training

Training is important not just for biosecurity but for workplace health and safety obligations.

To understand biosecurity and how it helps to prevent incidents, it’s important that all persons who work on your property receive some form of training in the tasks that they are required to do.

This includes staff or visitors that might lend a hand.

### Biosecurity and animal welfare

Staff not trained in biosecurity practices and welfare relevant to their roles increase the risk of injury to livestock, staff or visitors.

Staff includes any family members who are exposed to production areas of your property.

If you do not have staff, consider any person who may handle your livestock (e.g. contractors, agents, etc.).

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Placing emergency hotline numbers in a common and visible location
  + EAD Watch Hotline: 1800 675 888
  + Emergency Plant Pest Hotline: 1800 084 881
* Maintaining a staff training plan and qualifications log
* Induct employees and contractors

#### Ensure all staff:

* Understand their roles and responsibilities
* Know how to identify sick and injured livestock
* Are competent livestock handlers
* Are trained in plant pest and disease identification and control
* Know what to do in the event of a suspected EAD or Emergency Plant Pest
* Know where to find contact details for the local vet(s) and relevant government officers
* Are familiar with common zoonotic diseases, understand the risks and can recognise the signs of infection
* Are vaccinated for high-risk diseases (e.g. Q-Fever and tetanus)

### Emergency Animal Diseases and Emergency Plant Pests

An outbreak of an emergency disease or pest is likely to have a significant effect on your property management plan, due to the high probability of government intervention. You can assist in an emergency by ensuring the threat is identified and contained as soon as possible, facilitating a rapid response.

#### Mitigate this risk by:

* Knowing the symptoms of EADs (such as FMD)
* Inspecting livestock and crops regularly to ensure the early detection of ill animals or new pests and diseases in crops
* Training staff in emergency disease notification procedures
* Encouraging or supporting staff to attend pest and disease identification training
* Undertaking the free EAD Foundation training or training on FMD through Animal Health Australia.

## Planning

Planning is an instrumental part of sound biosecurity practices. If you plan for situations that may arise then you will always be in a position to respond quickly.

### Biosecurity planning

A property biosecurity management plan contains a risk assessment for the enterprise, as well as an action plan designed mitigate those risks. Failure to be prepared can delay time to detection, reporting and response in the event of a biosecurity outbreak. This could increase the impact on your property and the industry more broadly.

#### Maintain an effective plan by:

* Reviewing and updating your biosecurity plan to ensure it accurately reflects your operations and addresses key risks, ideally every 12 months or sooner if:
* the risk to your property changes
* your management practices change
* you experience a significant biosecurity incursion
* Where higher risks are identified putting in place practices that reduce these risks
* Identifying emergency events that would have an impact on your usual operation and add in a plan to reduce them

### Contingency planning

From time to time, an emergency situation may arise which can change the biosecurity risks affecting your property.

These situations may include fire, flood, drought and extreme weather, or any circumstances which might cause you to suspend your normal management practices, including your biosecurity plan.

#### Maintain an effective plan by:

* Having a contingency plan, including factors which would trigger it
* Having procedures in place for evacuating livestock if necessary
* Including backup feed and water supplies in your plan
* Cleaning and disinfecting infrastructure following an incident
* Increasing your monitoring of livestock for signs of disease
* Inspecting paddocks and yards for new pests and weeds

## Records management

Records are a critical element in biosecurity management, food safety, product integrity, plant and animal health and emergency disease responses.

It is important to keep accurate records not only for your business and to comply with legislation in your state, but also for industry verification programs that require specific information and history (e.g. LPA, NFAS).

### Livestock Production Assurance Program

Managed by Integrity Systems Company, the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program is the Australian livestock industry’s on-farm assurance program covering food safety, animal welfare and biosecurity. It provides evidence of livestock history and on-farm practices when transferring livestock through the value chain.

The LPA NVD is the main document underpinning Australia’s reputation as a reliable supplier of safe red meat to domestic and international markets. It is required by the majority of saleyards and processors. Participation is voluntary but you must be LPA accredited to access an LPA NVD.

#### Meet this requirement by creating and maintaining:

* Property Risk Assessment & Map
* Animal treatment records
* Chemical inventory records
* Crop, paddock and pasture treatment records
* Grain and fodder treatment records
* Introduced stock feed records
* Commodity Vendor Declarations
* Preparation of livestock for dispatch records
* Livestock purchases and movements onto property records
* Livestock sales and movements off property records
* Biosecurity plan
* A copy of the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines
* Animal welfare certificate (completed on the LPA Portal)
* LPA reaccreditation certificate (completed on the LPA Portal)

### NLIS/traceability

NLIS records are mandatory for sheep, goats, cattle, buffalo and pigs (PigPass). Producers must ensure that all

You are also required to have a Property Identification Code (PIC) if you keep one or more livestock or the prescribed amount of poultry. Check your state or territories requirements.

#### Meet this requirement by:

* Ensuring all transfers onto your property are reported to the NLIS database within the legislated timeframe for your state/territory

### Animal health records:

Records of animal health are important for disease traceability, chemical usage and demonstrating animal welfare practices.

#### Meet this requirement by keeping:

* Treatment records
* Laboratory of veterinary results and reports
* Records associated with participation in surveillance programs
* Details of feral animal management programs

### Chemicals used on premise

Chemicals, including those used for weed or pest control, can pose animal health, biosecurity and food safety risks

#### Meet this requirement by keeping:

* Records of chemicals used, including when and where and the environmental conditions
* Any records required to ensure vendor declarations are correctly filled out
* Records of contaminated sites, contaminated infrastructure, discarded batteries and other equipment
* Records of baiting programs within the area

### Disease and pest monitoring

Keeping accurate records of when monitoring was carried out and what was found (or not found) assists in identifying when a disease or pest was introduced to the property.

#### Meet this requirement by:

* Ensuring you take note of monitoring activities and their results
* Asking staff or consultants who undertake this role to keep records

### Stock feed records

Stock feed records support proof of compliance with legislative requirements regarding RAM and assist in ensuring traceability in the event of contamination detection.

#### Meet this requirement by keeping:

* Invoices for bulk stock feeds
* Commodity vendor declarations
* Fodder vendor declarations

### Farm supplies

Records relating to soil, plant matter, fertiliser, manure or other products that are moved to or from the property aid in traceability and disease spread management.

Movement of soil and plants may also be restricted from certain areas and their movement may have legislative requirements.

Records of where manure goes to should also be kept. Animal manure and some fertilisers are considered RAM and therefore receivers should be made aware of this as so they can implement practices to ensure ruminants do not have access to RAM.

#### Meet this requirement by keeping:

* Records of product usage as required by your state or territory
* Records of incoming and outgoing products

### People movement

People records must be kept for traceability purposes in the event of a disease outbreak.

#### Meet this requirement by keeping:

* Visitor logs
* Vendor records
* Staff schedules and time sheets

### Training records

Training records can be used to prove compliance with your WHS responsibilities and staff mentoring programs,

Records can also be used to support legislation and industry programs, or as proof of ongoing training, upskilling and skill maintenance.

#### Meet this requirement by keeping:

* A register of staff qualifications, including consultants
* An up-to-date induction package for staff and consultants
* Records of training provided to staff
* Records of additional training undertaken by staff