

Suggested Biosecurity Guidelines for Visitors to University of Illinois Farms

- Visitors should contact the herd manager prior to a visit to discuss the farm's requirements for biosecurity in terms of clothing, animal contact, showering, etc.
- Visitors to swine and poultry farms must not have been on another farm in the past 24-48 hours. Even then, they must shower-in and wear only farm-supplied clothes.
- Farm managers should question potential visitors about recent contact with animals in other herds or visits to foreign countries. In the course of the interview, the manager can decide whether the person represents a low, medium, or high-risk visitor and then take appropriate measures.
- Visitors should avoid unnecessary animal contact. For observing outside buildings and outside fences, new disposable plastic boots or protective footwear supplied by the farm should be used.
- Visitors should be dressed in clean outerwear (not worn on any other farm since being cleaned) if it is necessary for him/her to be in buildings, alleyways, lots, pens, or pastures normally accessible to the herd.
- Disposable coveralls and disposable plastic boots are recommended; however, clean laundered coveralls and clean disinfected rubber boots may be acceptable. If disposable outerwear is impractical, the farm should supply the reusable coveralls and boots to reduce the chance of additional pathogens being introduced. Because of the difficulty in satisfactorily disinfecting reusable boots, plastic disposable boots, are suggested for most cases. However, disposable plastic boots are more subject to leaks when worn for an extended time or on abrasive surfaces, and they provide very poor traction for walking in snow or on smooth wet floors. The biosecurity risk must be weighed against the safety risk associated with their use.
- If visitors supply the outerwear, coveralls should be clean or new and should be protected from cross-contamination with dirty items. To minimize the difficulty in cleaning rubber boots, the boots should be free of creases, folds, and buckles; the tread pattern on the bottom should not be aggressive so that debris cannot be removed easily. Head covers and dust masks can provide added protection. In cases where clean rubber (reusable) boots are used, they should be dipped or soaked in disinfectant solution as part of the donning of the coveralls and boots just before entering animal facilities.
- When leaving the farm, protective outer-clothing worn on a farm should be removed before entering the vehicle and left on that farm if at all possible. Reusable coveralls should be placed in a plastic bag and tied-off until they can be laundered. Reusable boots should be scrubbed free of debris with water, soaked in disinfectant solution, and then placed in a plastic bag or other container for transport allowing the disinfectant to dry on them.
- Do not allow visitors to enter pens, walk through feed alleys, or touch animals unless necessary.
- Do not allow visitors to bring food articles with them on the farm.
- Any sampling equipment should be properly cleaned and disinfected between uses.
- Vehicles should be clean and free of visible manure on the tires and wheel wells and should be kept away from animal areas and driveways used by the farm's own vehicles. In an emergency disease situation, such as the presence of FMD in the United States, restrictions on access to the farm should be in place. Livestock trucks and trailers should be clean and dry, and preferable disinfected, before arrival on the farm.

Biosecurity Issues to Consider When Planning a Farm Tour Where Livestock Are Present

- Discuss policies with a designated spokesperson.
- Publish the biosecurity standards for the event. If registration or sign-in takes place at the farm on the day of the tour, the biosecurity standards can be reinforced at that point. Consider including information on:
 - a. **Dress standards**—Clean outerwear not worn on another farm since cleaning.
 - b. **Boots**—Disposable plastic boots are preferred and will be supplied. Reusable rubber boots will be examined for cleanliness and suitability, and approved by the farm manager or designee. Anyone wearing reusable boots will disinfect them before entering the farm.
 - c. **Foreign travelers**—Advise persons who have returned from traveling outside North America in the past seven days to notify the farm manager. The farm manager can evaluate the risk and render a decision about the person's participation in the tour.
 - d. **Food products**—Foods of animal origin should not be brought onto the farm.
- Establish an entry point from the parking area to the animal facilities through which all visitors will pass. A sign may indicate boots are needed beyond this point.
- Disposable boots should be the standard if the tour is to include walking in livestock buildings and in pastures or forages that will be harvested for animal consumption within two weeks.
- If disposable plastic boots are deemed unsuitable for the tour and reusable rubber boots are used, a boot washing station should be set up. The station should have provisions for scrubbing and rinsing all visible soil off the boots. The boots are then immersed in a clean disinfectant solution for five minutes before entering the premise.
- Minimize actual contact with animals, animal waste, and discharges. Keep visitors back 10 feet or more where possible.
- Provisions should be made for cleansing hands and exposed skin if actual animal contact is anticipated. Consider providing alcohol-based hand rinses and cleansing gels where soap and water are not readily available. Hand washing is especially important if children, the elderly, or immunosuppressed individuals will be participating in the tour.
- Provide a receptacle for discarded plastic boots convenient to the point where visitors will be departing from the animal area. Ideally, the used boots (and disposable coveralls) can be bagged in plastic trash bags and then placed in a dumpster for removal.
- Vehicles should be clean and free of visible manure on the tires and wheel wells and should be kept away from animal areas and driveways used by the farm's own vehicles. In an emergency disease situation, such as the presence of FMD in the United States, restrictions on access to the farm should be in place. Livestock trucks and trailers should be clean and dry, and preferable disinfected, before arrival on the farm.

Guidelines for Visiting Multiple Livestock Projects

It is sometimes necessary to examine and tag project animals at several different locations on the same day (such as a 4-H advisor observing club members' livestock projects). When facing such a task, the following items should be considered in the interest of good biosecurity.

- Schedule as few farms as possible having the same species of animals on any given day. It would be better to visit one hog project, one lamb project, and one steer project in a day rather than three lamb projects.
- Give farms with full-time livestock production units the opportunity to be visited first on a given day. The impact of a biosecurity breach is much less for locations where there is only a market project animal(s).
- Keep the number of people in the traveling party to the minimum needed to accomplish the job. For biosecurity, it would be better to have multiple small groups visiting separate farms rather than one larger group that has to visit all the farms.
- Use disposable plastic boots if the visit requires entering animal facilities. If animal contact is possible, coveralls should be worn. Alternative ways to handle coveralls, in descending order of preference:
 - a. New disposable coveralls for each farm.
 - b. Coveralls to be worn by visitors are supplied by each farm.
 - c. Visitor supplies clean reusable coveralls for each stop.
- Request that each farm supply as much equipment as possible for use with their own animals (nose-leads, snares, tattoo sets, tagging pliers, and buckets). Clean and sanitize all transported equipment before and after use at each location.
- Before and after handling animals at each location, cleanse hands and exposed skin subject to animal contact. Consider wearing disposable examination gloves whenever possible.
- Leave used disposable items (boots, coveralls, gloves) at the farm where they are used. All the items can be sealed in a small trash bag for convenient disposal by the owner. If clean and contaminated items will be transported in the vehicle of the visitor, separate containers for each should be used to prevent cross-contamination.

The information in this fact sheet is intended to raise issues related to biosecurity that merit consideration if animals are to be moved between established groups, or if people move between groups of animals. Each recommendation should be evaluated on its own merit for the specific situation. An animal health specialist should be consulted in formulating the good management practices to prevent and control disease in livestock populations.