



Ontario Veterinary Biosecurity Initiative

Protocol 1

On-Farm Veterinary Biosecurity

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Protocol 1 – On-Farm Veterinary Biosecurity

This document provides suggested practices for veterinarians to help prevent the spread of disease agents. It is not all-inclusive nor will all steps be applicable to all species. This protocol is not designed to replace established veterinary practices but rather to build on those being used by other sectors of the farming and services sectors.

Normal level of biosecurity

Suggested Protocols for Veterinarians Making Regular On-Farm Visits

Preparing for an On-Farm Visit

Ensure your vehicle is stocked with the following biosecurity supplies and equipment:

- Rubber over-boots that allow for easy disinfection and do not collect organic debris and/or disposable boots of heavy plastic at least three millimeters thick.
- Washable coveralls that can be easily cleaned and disinfected and/or disposable coveralls of reinforced paper
- Disinfectant with equipment pail, plastic or non-porous boot brush and/or smaller spray or squeezable container filled with disinfectant solution for small equipment cleaning
- Hand sanitizer
- Paper towels
- Access to at least four liters of water.
- Plastic non-permeable tool box that can be easily cleaned and disinfected and contains required testing equipment and postmortem tools for that visit. Separate compartment or separate box for soiled tools or samples for submission, sealed in plastic bags
- Sharps container that is disposable or readily sanitized
- Record keeping system to track farm contacts and activities with a high degree of accuracy.
- Polyethylene bags to store used coveralls and contaminated articles
- **Emergency kit** should be in vehicle and contain:
 - Tyvek® coveralls for use in high risk situations
 - Disposable head coverings, N95 respirator masks if appropriate and disposable gloves

Arriving at the Farm

The OLPC has developed and distributed biosecurity protocols for both poultry and livestock farms. Protocols 4 and 5 (pages 13-16) list relatively simple biosecurity protocols farmers can implement on their farms to reduce the risk of introducing and spreading disease. Knowing Protocols 4 and 5 can help you anticipate biosecurity expectations your client may have. The following are the suggested general protocols upon arrival at the farm:

- Know and respect your client's bio-security expectations
- Shower in – out if one is available and is the farmer's protocol.
- Pens and other inexpensive equipment can be taken into and left on the farm.
- On cattle farms they often do not have the equipment needed. (i.e. ropes, calving equipment). Try to keep them "clean"
- Ensure equipment required at the farm is clean before leaving vehicle
- Inform the farmer of your arrival.

Entering the Barn

When entering the barn follow these suggested protocols as well as the farm's biosecurity protocols:

- Sign time and date producer's logbook if they have one.
- Clean hands thoroughly with hand sanitizer or sanitizer soap
- Change into any boots, coveralls or gloves that the producer provides
- Hang raincoat or winter coat in non livestock area.
- If a Foreign Animal Disease or serious endemic or zoonotic disease is suspected, consider using disposable gloves, Tyvek coveralls, hair-cover and a mask from your emergency kit.
- Take only the required equipment, sampling kits, recording devices into the barn.
- Consider protective coverings that are left on the farm for equipment that must be in the livestock area – e.g. ultrasound equipment.
- Look for a clean, dry and elevated area for placing medical equipment
- If a return to the vehicle is necessary, do not enter the vehicle with your boots on and ensure that when re-entering the animal facilities your clothing and boots are clean.

Examining the Animals or Birds

- When possible, plan your examinations from youngest to oldest or healthiest to sickest
- Isolate used equipment from the "clean" equipment
- If ropes are required, use the farmer's ropes if they are suitable
- Encourage producers to have their own equipment such as ropes, calf pullers, hog snares, etc.

Leaving the Barn and the Farm

When preparing to leave:

- Knock off any visible debris from attire or equipment
- Using the nearby water supply, clean attire and equipment
- Wash and sanitize cleanable equipment and replace in vehicle
- Place non-cleanable equipment in dirty area of vehicle
- Clean non-washable equipment such as laptops, clipboards, blackberries, etc. with disinfectant wipes
- Remove coveralls, gloves and any other PPE
- Clean scrub brush in pail of water and spray with disinfectant or sanitizer soap
- Clean and disinfect exterior of test kits. Place samples (vials, tissues) in a clean outer jacket
- Obtain a pail of water for final cleaning of boots; remove boots before entering truck
- Wash hands thoroughly in hand sanitizer
- Keep the inside of the vehicle as a clean zone and the trunk or back as the dirty zone
- Drive slowly and avoid visible debris
- When returning to your veterinary facility, follow the Veterinary Facility Biosecurity Protocol.

Emergency Preparedness includes four major steps. These include preparation for, prevention of response to and recovery from and major outbreak of disease. The details are outlined in protocol 3 on emergency management. Biosecurity is part of the prevention part of the Emergency Preparedness process either preventing the disease from entering a farm or preventing it from leaving (also called Bio-containment).

If a major Infectious Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) such as Foot-and-Mouth disease, Hog Cholera or Avian Influenza occurs in Ontario the Canadian Food Inspection Agency must be alerted as these and 29 others are reportable disease under the Health of animals Act. The agency will take over management of the disease and establish a control zone which could be a whole province or country. Inside this zone they will likely establish a 3 km infected zone around the index farm, a 10 km restricted zone and identify the rest of the control zone as a surveillance zone. In order to enter the restricted zone veterinarians would need to obtain a permit from the CFIA and would be required to follow the CFIA's guidelines and procedures on entrance and exit of a premise. This would be called **Enhanced Biosecurity** and besides carrying out routine biosecurity procedures would likely require one use Tyvek coveralls, plastic booties, washable gloves, and possibly a mask and head covering. Limits would be put on visiting other same species farms for up to three days and all equipment and vehicles would likely need to be thoroughly washed and disinfected before leaving the restricted zone.