

**For Tour Organizers
Recommended Biosecurity Practices
for Farm Visitors from Other Countries**

As a general biosecurity recommendation, farms should only admit visitors that are essential to the farming operation. People can spread pests and disease on footwear, hands, hair and clothing. Viruses can live in nasal passages. The concern is even greater with foreign visitors as they could introduce a new strain of pest or disease from their country or a known foreign animal disease, e.g. Foot and Mouth Disease is endemic in many parts of the World.

Consider the following biosecurity practices when organizing on-farm visits by non-Canadian residents or visitors returning to Canada from other countries.

- Prior to the farm visit, provide the host farmer with a list of participants, the last country visited, and their country of residence with full contact information. Establish if, when and what types of farms have been visited by participants prior to visiting farms in Canada.
- Ask each host farmer for their farm's biosecurity practices and comply with them.
- Publish the biosecurity standards for the event in the tour information and promotional materials.
- Ensure each tour participant is aware of the farm's biosecurity protocols and provide translation when necessary.
- Inquire whether they have any signs of personal illness, (e.g. headache, fever, chills, cough, sore throat, runny nose, etc.). Recommend that anyone who is not feeling well, not participate in the tour.
- Schedule as few farms as possible having the same species of animals on any given day.

- **Low-risk visitors** come from urban areas and have not had contact with livestock or poultry.
- **Moderate-risk visitors** are those that have been on another farm recently but have not had direct contact with livestock or poultry.
- **High-risk visitors** are those that have been on another farm recently and have had direct contact with livestock or poultry either at a farm, live animal market, fair, or other venue.

You have a role to play in helping to keep Canada's animals healthy. Remember, it is not just farmed animals which can pass on disease; it includes contact with wildlife, pets and zoo animals (including petting zoos).

- Give farms with full-time livestock production units and higher health status farms the opportunity to be visited first on a given day.
- If there are multiple laneways or access points to the farm, ask the farmer which one your vehicle(s) should use.
- Before arriving at the farm, ask about a specific parking area for visitors. The area should well-drained, gravelled, free of manure, and a minimum of 15 feet from the barn. Do not park vehicles under exhaust fans or intakes.

- Visitors' vehicles should be visibly clean of manure and organic matter.
- If there is a farm visitor log book, ensure all tour participants' names, date of visit, last country visited and country of residence are recorded.
- Do not allow foods of animal origin to be brought onto the premises.
- Provide boots and coveralls for visitors at each barn. If you don't have boots for visitors, supply plastic covers. If you don't have visitor coveralls, insist on clean clothing that has not been worn on another farm since being laundered.
- If a footbath is used at the farm, boots must be scrubbed free of manure or other organic material before stepping into the footbath. Oversee the use of the footbath by your tour participants.
- Keep visitors out of animal pens and feed alleys and do not allow direct contact with animals.
- If the farm does not have hand washing facilities, provide a bottle of hand sanitizer for visitors and insist they use it upon entry and exit from facility.
- Provide a container or plastic bag immediately outside the facility or in the anteroom for collecting farm supplied dirty clothing or any disposable items used by visitors. This will ensure visitors do not carry waste material off the farm with them.

TIP When using a hand sanitizer, be sure to use enough to cover all surfaces of your hands, including between your fingers, and rub your hands until they are dry. The alcohol content of the sanitizer must be at least 60% to be effective. Check the expiration date.

Sources:

1. Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Biosecurity Considerations for Ag Tourism Ventures, Agriculture Business Strategies, Agdex 888-7, October 2005.
2. Bowman, Gary L., Shulaw, William PI, Biosecurity Fundamentals for Extension Personnel, Ohio State University Extension Factsheet, VME-5-2001, June 2001.
3. Bowman, Gary L., Shulaw, William PI, On-Farm Biosecurity: Traffic Control and Sanitation, Ohio State University Extension Factsheet, VME-6-2001, June 2001.
4. Canadian Food Inspection Agency, <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/information-for-consumers/travellers/visitor-to-canada/eng/1389644337592/1389644527136>
5. Dalrymple, Jim, Innes, Dr. Paul, Biosecurity Fundamentals for Visitors to Livestock Facilities, OMAFRA Factsheet 04-003, February 2004.
6. Foreign Visitor Guidelines, <http://biosecurity.swinehealth.ca>, September 2011.
7. Ontario Livestock and Poultry Council, Livestock On-Farm Biosecurity Information Guide, July 2012.