Poultry Farm Biosecurity Workshop
Farm Case Study Example

This fictional farm example will illustrate and explain some of the key biosecurity points outlined in the National Biosecurity Standards. The questions related to the farm case will prepare you for completing your own farm self-assessment and action plan.

Farm Management:

Big Bird Poultry is a broiler operation run by Pete, his wife and his two teenage sons. Both Pete and his wife have full time jobs off-farm. The farm has two barns on 100 acres. Pete bought this farm without quota five years ago, and it sat empty until he purchased quota last year.

He currently borrows much of his equipment (tractors, pressure washers, manure handling equipment) from his brother John, who owns a 20,000 layer and pullet rearing operation on the 100 acre parcel of land behind him.

Both his barns are old and in need of repair. There are numerous gaps around doors where daylight is clearly visible, creating a challenge to heat the barn in the winter. The inlets have sections of screen missing and wild birds are nesting in the soffit. Pete realizes these issues need to be corrected, but has not had the time or funds to make the necessary repairs. Pete has not yet gone through a complete OFFSAP audit.

Operations:

Big Bird Poultry consists of 30,000 units of broiler quota with two barns on one property. Both barns are two storey and of the same dimensions. Pete alternates the marketing of the barns, with one barn shipping 5 weeks after the other. He does this to spread the workload between the two barns. One of Pete's challenges is that he has more quota than barn. He thought he might build an addition on one of the barns because he bought the quota for a good price, but he over-extended himself. He is on a 10 week cycle growing heavy roasters to 3.75 kg in 48-49 days and he thins out at 2.1 kg @ 35-36 days. In his last couple of flocks, he has had challenges with bronchitis and higher than normal condemnations.

Barn Cleanout: Pete alternates the shipping dates of the two barns. After each shipping, Pete dry cleans and blows down the dust. Once a year, Pete is planning to do a complete cleaning and disinfection (C&D) of the barns.

Biosecurity: The property has 2 access points from the road, and neither has a barrier or signage to restrict entry. Feed and other service providers currently park at the barn, by the house or wherever is convenient.

The doors to the barns are locked. At the entrance to each barn there are footbaths, change of clothes (coveralls), and a log book. He changes the footbath disinfectant weekly.

Bird Sourcing: Pete buys his chicks from a HACCP-certified broiler hatchery.

Feed: Pete buys complete feed rations from a local HAACP-certified mill.
Water: Pete's maximum flow out of his drilled well is <3 gallons/min. This means that often Pete cannot flow enough water from his well to meet the birds' requirements. To compensate, Pete uses a

pond on the property as a reserve that he can draw from when the birds' water requirements outstrip the well capacity. He pumps water from the well into the pond when the birds' daily water intake allows him to do so. The water is filtered using particulate filters down to 10 microns and is chlorinated using a medicator.

Bedding: Pete utilizes chopped straw from his farm to bed his broilers. He does need to buy extra straw occasionally and stores all the straw in his driveshed. In the past Pete has bought straw that has been baled wet and has turned mouldy. Pete has his own bale chopper.

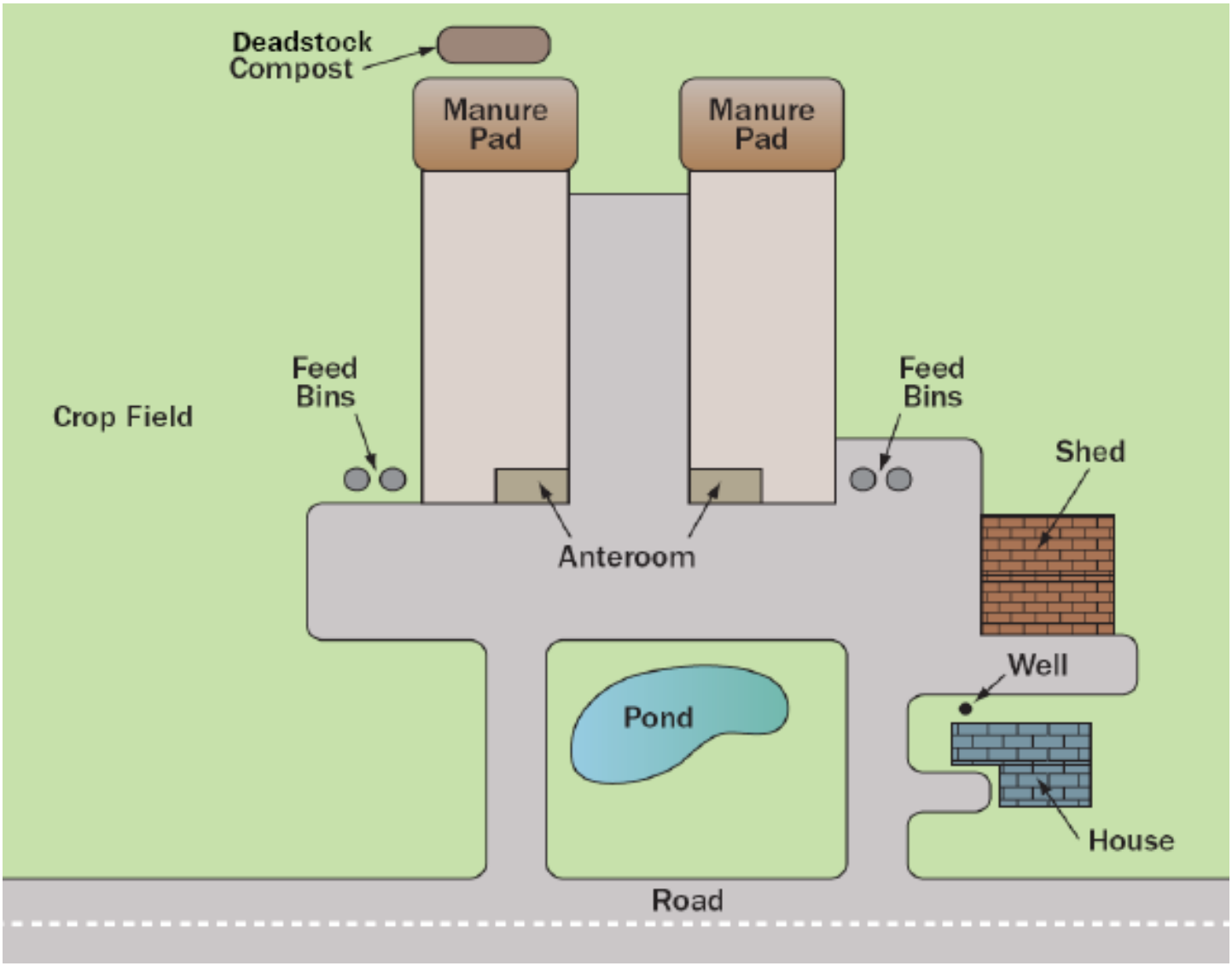
Deadstock strategy: Pete composts his mortalities in windrows on a cement pad on his property. Straw and broiler litter are used for substrate. Pete uses the mix and pile method as he adds daily mortalities to the windrow and turns the compost pile with the front-end loader that he borrows from John.

Flock growout: Pete and his wife both work off-farm, and whoever is home tends to the birds. Pete's wife does not like to cull, but she picks up deads, records them and leaves them for Pete to dispose of in a 45 gallon drum at the end of the barn. Sometimes the kids will walk the barn to help pick up deads but they often do not record the details. Weekends are often occupied with hockey tournaments and other family activities, sometimes requiring overnight stays. When they are away Pete's brother John will tend to the birds. He will walk the barn and pick up the deads. He will not cull or record details, but leaves the mortalities in the 45 gallon drum by the back door for Pete to deal with when he gets back.

Health Monitoring: Pete has no particular vet that he works with. When there is an issue he works through the hatchery or feedmill rep and their veterinarian.

Manure: Manure is stored on a cement pad 20 metres behind the barns to be land applied once a year on the property. He rents out the land to John on a corn- wheat- soy rotation.

Diagram of Farm Layout



Farm Case Study Questions

1. Where and by what methods might Big Bird Poultry establish their CAZ, RAZ and CAPs?

2. List 3 access management issues faced by Big Bird Poultry and some possible solutions.

3. Identify 2 biosecurity risks on Pete's farm related to his animal health management.

4. List some possible changes he could make to reduce these risks

5. Identify 3 operational management biosecurity risks with Pete's farm and list some possible solutions.

6. Pete understands the importance of keeping records of his flock's performance and productivity. What are some things Pete is doing right?

7. List some ways in which Pete could improve his record-keeping.

8. Identify some areas where Big Bird Poultry would benefit from developing SOPs and training farm workers in their use.