

Sheep Biosecurity Workshop

Farm Case Study A

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 and Lay-out:

Mr. and Mrs. Lamb own a flock of purebred Suffolk sheep. Both have off-farm jobs. Mr. Lamb works at the local Co-op in the feed department, (8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) while Mrs. Lamb works at a local restaurant as a waitress (11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). Mrs. Lamb does morning chores while Mr. Lamb feeds the flock at night. The couple own 100 acres and have 100 ewes. The neighbouring farm has a large dairy goat operation.

There is one main driveway which provides access to the house and barns. There is designated parking on the lawn by the house however it does not have a sign. When visitors arrive they are recorded in a log book and, if going to the barn, they are required to wear disposable plastic boots over their footwear. Clean clothes and shoes are a must.

Livestock Operations:

Mr. and Mrs. Lamb keep their 100 Suffolk ewes in a bank barn. Ewes can run in or out of the barn and have access to large barnyards which lead out to pastures through the day. There is a small barn which is used to house rams.

The couple have 80 mature ewes, 20 replacement ewe lambs, five mature rams and 11 yearling rams which they are looking to sell as breeding stock. Their breeding stock is well known and desired in the industry. All other ewe lambs are sold to commercial producers and the excess ram lambs are sent to the sale barn for meat.

The couple also owns two livestock guardian dogs, a horse which belongs to Mrs. Lamb and four barn cats. All of these animals come in contact with the sheep daily.

Replacement animals are sourced from producers with equal or higher health status. The couple are also on the Ontario Sheep Health Program, the Maedi-Visna Health Program and the Scrapie Program. New animals are quarantined for two months in the main barn in designated pens separated by a solid wall from the main flock. The flock veterinarian performs blood tests on quarantined animals to ensure they are negative for Maedi-Visna. The veterinarian works closely with Mr. and Mrs. Lamb and assists them with all of the health programs and protocols.

The couple is currently on the GenOvis program for genetic evaluations. They record all vaccinations and medications given as well as lambing information, mortality information and livestock movement. The Lambs are very conscientious about maintaining their high herd health status.

There are designated pens for sick animals and for lambing ewes. Sick pens are disinfected after use and are not used for lambing. Ewe lambs and mature ewes are housed in the main barn and the rams in the smaller barn.

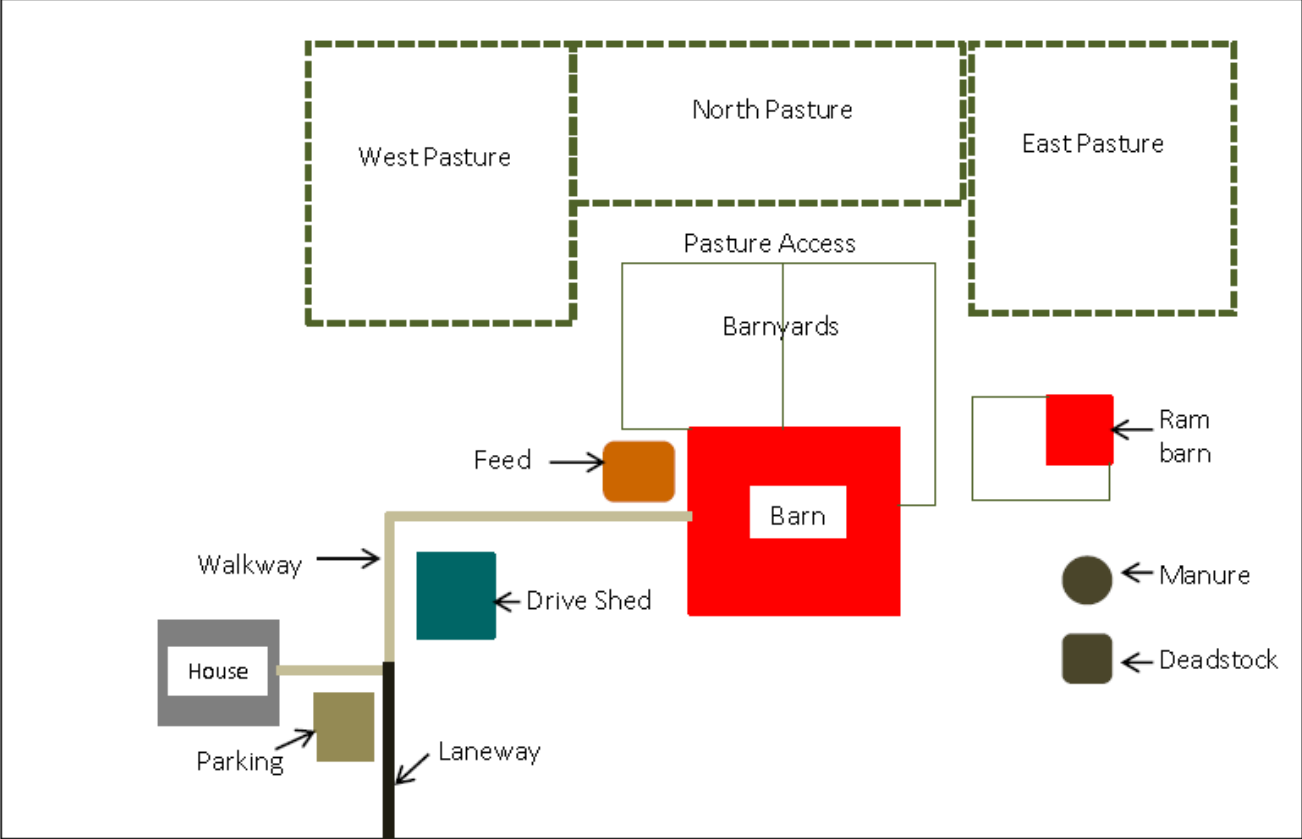
The couple mostly sells breeding stock through private sales with interested buyers coming to their farm. The couple use their pick-up truck with modified bed cap to haul excess ram lambs to a local sale barn.

Deadstock is put in the manure pile and composted. Manure is spread on the fields. All hay and straw is produced on-farm. Mr. Lamb brings home grain in feedbags as he receives a discount working for the local Co-op.

A month ago, the shearer came to shear the flock and inquired whether he should bring his race and shearing gate but the couple are very biosecurity conscious so they bought their own gate. They already had a handling system in the top of their bank barn.

Mrs. Lamb recently noticed that two of their sheep had abscesses on their cheeks. The flock veterinarian came to look at these two ewes and confirmed through testing that they had Caseous Lymphadenitis (CLA). The Lambs are very disturbed by this diagnosis as they have taken great care with their biosecurity and herd health practices.

Diagram of Farm Layout



Farm Case Study Questions

In many cases, there is no single correct answer. The choice of action may depend on several factors, and what is practical and achievable under the circumstances.

1. Where and by what methods might this farm establish their CAZ, RAZ and CAPs?
2. List **three** access management issues faced by this farm and identify some possible changes they could make to reduce these risks.
3. Identify **three** biosecurity risks on this farm related to animal health management and suggest how these risks could be mitigated.
4. Identify **three** operational management biosecurity risks with this farm and list some possible solutions.
5. What is this farm doing that would be considered good biosecurity practices? List at least **five**.