

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Iowa Biosecurity Guide

The transmission of infectious animal diseases, such as foot and mouth, avian influenza, porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDv), Johne's disease, and others threaten livestock operations. The spread of plant pests, plant diseases, and weeds such as horseweed, waterhemp, giant ragweed, and Palmer amaranth can reduce production and increase management costs. These threats to our food supply are a national concern requiring the cooperative participation of USDA, partners, and our clients.

We have the responsibility to ensure that we do not carry disease or noxious organisms with us as we go from farm to farm. ***Not every situation will be covered in policy. Consider how your actions might spread a pathogen or pest and act to prevent it.***

NRCS has three levels of biosecurity for visits to livestock farms:

- Level 1:** Office or home visits only.
- Level 2:** Visits with minimal contact to animal manure, livestock, or their housing.
- Level 3:** Visits with close contact to livestock. Try to avoid situations where Level 3 biosecurity protocol is required.

NRCS also has biosecurity protocols for crop production and other sites to prevent the transmission of pathogens, pests, and invasive species.

Preparing Your Vehicle and Purchasing Supplies

- Designate a "clean" area or bin in your vehicle to place clean equipment and boots.
- Designate a "dirty" area or bin in your vehicle for clothing and equipment that has been used on the farm and requires cleaning or disposal.
- Consult the Iowa Biosecurity Preparedness and Response Supply list and purchase supplies ahead.

Planning the Farm Visit

Make an appointment. Ask the producer before the visit:

- if the farm has a biosecurity plan
- if they currently have an outbreak of an infectious animal disease

- if they have any diseases, plant pests, or noxious weed issues.

If there is an infectious animal disease outbreak on the farm meet off-site and post-pone any inventory that would put you in contact with livestock or their waste.

Follow the farm's biosecurity protocol if more stringent than NRCS protocol. Some farms require a minimum "down time" between visits with other farms, or may require you to use their equipment and clothing while in close contact with the animals on site. Document the farm's biosecurity protocols and your biosecurity procedures (e.g. "Followed Level 2 biosecurity protocols.") in the IA-CPA-15 Conservation Assistance Notes.

Think about the purpose of the visit. Can you accomplish the purpose by just visiting the farm office or are you doing something for which you must come into contact with animals or crop fields?

If possible, schedule work to minimize the need for frequent cleaning and disinfecting.

- For animal production sites, try to visit when livestock are not present.
- For crop production sites, try to visit when crops are not growing.
- When arranging your day, save for last any site visit that will require washing the vehicle afterwards, to minimize trips back to town.

When making a visit without an appointment or prior client authorization, observe and follow any biosecurity signage and only visit the home or office. Follow Level 1 biosecurity procedures.

Prior to Arrival for the Farm Visit

Ensure that your clothing is clean. Employees involved with farming operations on their own time will, as they go from their operation to work, need to follow biosecurity protocols to avoid transmission to client operations. Consider separate home farm and NRCS clothes and boots.

Make sure the vehicle and equipment you will be using are clean.

ANIMAL PRODUCTION SITES

Level 1: Office or Home Visits

Visits to the office or home with no contact with livestock or livestock waste require basic biosecurity.

Arriving for the Visit

- Park the vehicle on hardened area designated for parking, if available. Park the vehicle away from animal areas and out of any runoff coming from animal areas. Avoid driving in manure or wastewater runoff.
- Wash hands with soap and water or an antibacterial gel.

After the Visit is Complete

- Wash hands with soap and water or disinfect with an antibacterial gel.

Level 2: Visits with Minimal Contact to Animal Manure, Livestock, or their Housing

This includes pastures.

Arriving for the Visit

- Park the vehicle on hardened area designated for parking, if available. Park the vehicle away from animal areas and out of any runoff coming from animal areas, if possible. Avoid, if possible, driving in manure or wastewater runoff.
- Wash hands with soap & water or antibacterial gel.
- Put on clean rubber or new plastic boots prior to exiting the vehicle.

After the Visit is Complete

- Clean dirt and manure from equipment and rubber boots with a brush and water.
- Disinfect the equipment and boots. Mix and apply the disinfectant according to label directions to ensure the proper contact time of the disinfectant with the surface being disinfected.
- If the vehicle comes into contact with dirt or manure during the farm visit, clean dirt and manure from tires and wheel wells with water and a brush. If possible, also remove dirt and manure from other parts of the vehicle. If the vehicle cannot be completely cleaned in the field, take it to a car wash before visiting another farm. Give extra attention to cleaning the undercarriage. Disinfect the tires and wheel wells with disinfectant solution.
- Place disposable dirty items in a plastic bag and leave the bag on the premises for disposal by the owner/producer or place the bag in a designated dirty area of your vehicle to dispose of later.

- Dispose of disinfectant solution according to the label. Do not discard unused disinfectant on the ground.
- Wash hands with soap and water or disinfect with an antibacterial gel.

Level 3: Visits with Close Contact to Livestock

Follow Level 3 biosecurity procedures when you will be in close contact with livestock (walking through narrowly confined pens or lots where animals are within reach or handled in the process of working).

Arriving for the Visit

- Follow Level 1 and Level 2 procedures.
- Put on clean coveralls for each visit.
- Use nitrile gloves when in contact with livestock housing or manure.

After the Visit is Complete

- Follow Level 1 and Level 2 procedures.
- Remove coveralls in a manner that they are inside out and place them in a trash bag.
- Place the clean equipment and boots in the designated clean area of the vehicle.
- Launder all cloth coveralls.
- Shampoo hair and clean under fingernails.
- Do not visit more than one confinement production facility of the same species per day. Some producers may request two or three days between farms. Follow their request.

CROP, PASTURE, FOREST, & OTHER SITES

Arriving for the Visit

- Park to avoid contact with soil, seeds, or diseases if possible. Take special precaution to avoid known, pest infested sites.
- Make sure your equipment is clean and free of soil, seeds and organic matter.
- For situations requiring plant ID, photographic images are recommended. If sampling is required, use an airtight closable plastic bag to carry plants or plant pests removed from the site for off-site identification. Dispose of materials identified as diseased, infested, noxious, or invasive in a manner that will prevent spreading.

After the Visit is Complete

- Clean all equipment, shoes, and clothing of soil, seeds, and organic matter before leaving the site.
- If the vehicle is contaminated with soil, seeds, or organic matter, scrub the tires and wheel wells with a brush and water before leaving the site. If the vehicle cannot be cleaned in the field, take it to a car wash before visiting another farm. Clean the undercarriage.