

How to Reduce Risks to Your Farm in an FMD Outbreak

Increase farm biosecurity.

Proper biosecurity can reduce or even eliminate the risk of disease spreading to or from your farm. It can protect the health of your herd and the sustainability of your operation. During an outbreak of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD), biosecurity precautions are not just smart; they are absolutely essential. (See also the attached Job Aid: [How to Increase Farm Biosecurity: On-line Support](#))

Control what goes onto and off of your farm.

- Maintain fences and make sure that nothing enters or leaves without proper protection and oversight.
- Eliminate potential contact between livestock across fence lines, and keep out roaming pets, such as dogs and cats, that could track in virus.
- Keep yourself clean. Wear clean clothing (boots, cap, coveralls) whenever you may come in contact with your own livestock. Wash your hands thoroughly after any contact.
- If possible, allow only one farm access point, a single gate that you can close or, even better, lock. Other gates should be sealed off to discourage unauthorized entry.
- Post signs with specific biosecurity precautions that visitors need to follow. They should be told, for example, how to seek permission to enter, where to park and areas to avoid. (See attached Signs.)
- In particular, limit people's access to areas such as milking parlors or pens where visitors may come into contact with livestock or manure. Whenever possible, lock the barn door.
- Insofar as possible, vehicles should park off-farm, and visitors walk rather than drive in. Pickup and delivery of goods should be arranged at the farm gate rather than on the premises.
- Do not share your neighbor's farm machinery and equipment. In fact, whenever possible, do not even allow it to onto your farm. Dust, mud and manure on tires or an undercarriage, even halters and ropes, can carry FMD virus from farm to farm.

Minimize contact with visitors.

- Since anyone who comes to your farm could be carrying FMD virus, no people or vehicles should come onto your farm unless absolutely necessary. Insofar as control is limited, target traffic that represents the greatest risk, such as people who often travel between farms or who may have visited another farm on the same day that they visit yours.
- Visitors should park at the entrance to the farm, away from animal areas or in designated parking areas (ideally, paved to be washable), and enter on-foot. Insofar as possible, on the farm only use vehicles that are already on-farm.
- Be sure that everyone who must enter (e.g., an employee or veterinarian) follows proper cleaning and disinfection procedures. (See attached Job Aids: [How to Clean and Disinfect FMD Virus](#) and [How to Use Boot Baths](#)).
- Be sure that all visitors clean and then disinfect (especially footwear and hands) as well as vehicles (especially the tires and undercarriage) before entering your farm.
- They must also clean and disinfect themselves and their vehicle when they leave.

- Visitors should be accompanied by a farm employee at all times, someone to make sure that they avoid unnecessary contact with animals, animal products, or fomites.
- For essential visitors, keep some protective outer clothing (e.g., large-size coveralls and boots or disposable boot covers) as well as disinfectant boot baths at the entrance to animal areas. Be sure visitors remove and leave behind outer clothing and clean their footwear and then use the boot bath on the way out.
- Keep a written record of all visitors and vehicles entering your farm. Do not rely on your ability to “recall” every visitors and vehicles that has come to your farm. A complete and accurate log can be essential for tracking infection. (See attached Form, [Visitor Log](#)).

Clean and disinfect. (See also the attached Job Aid: [How to Clean and Disinfect FMD Virus](#).)

- Have the proper supplies and equipment, including a bucket of disinfectant, a brush, water and a hose at the entrance to your farm for all visitors to use.
- Maintain a functioning washing station for vehicles. It should include a pressure washer, brushes, hoses, water and disinfectant approved for deactivating FMD. The disinfectant should be kept at the correct temperature and concentration (There is a list of recommended and approved disinfectants in the attached Job Aid: [How to Clean and Disinfect FMD Virus](#)).
- Remember: Since clumps of mud or dirt will reduce the effectiveness of any disinfectant used and can prevent the disinfectant working on FMD virus, cleaning must precede disinfection.

Avoid visiting other farms.

- If you visit another farm, you risk both bringing FMD virus back to your farm and introducing the virus to the other farm. If a visit is unavoidable, do not wear the same clothes or footwear that you use when working with your own livestock.
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect yourself, especially your boots and hands as well as your vehicle, when entering and leaving the other farm.
- Wash the clothes that you wore on the other farm using a high-temperature wash cycle, prior to wearing them near your own animals.

Monitor herd health. (See also the attached Job Aid: [How to Spot Clinical Signs of FMD](#))

- During an outbreak, check your cattle regularly (at least twice each day) for clinical signs of FMD, such as.
 - Excessive salivation and lip smacking
 - Lameness
 - Fever
 - Loss of appetite
 - Reduced milk yield
 - Blisters in mouth, between toes and at heels
- Beware of lameness and unwillingness to feed in your herd. Mouths, and feet should be checked for blisters (which may be ruptured) or open sores.
- Check herd health in good light with the animals properly restrained.

What to do if you suspect FMD:

If you suspect FMD in any of your animals, you must report it immediately to the Office of the State Veterinarian. Early diagnosis can dramatically reduce disease spread; so do not delay. If you are reporting a suspicion of disease, do not allow people, animals, animal products, vehicles, carcasses or anything else associated with animals off the farm without the explicit permission of the State Veterinarian.