



Biosecurity

California Dairies

Biosecurity is a series of management procedures implemented to prevent the introduction and spread of disease into an environment.¹

What is Biosecurity?

Biosecurity is a plan to keep your dairy—both animals and products—safe from infectious agents or harmful chemicals. Biosecurity is achieved through evaluating your dairy for possible risks or vulnerabilities and taking steps to eliminate or minimize those risks. Effective biosecurity can help protect your farm against diseases or chemicals introduced via farm vehicles, service, and delivery personnel and visitors, or through intentional acts. Although these measures will help protect against exotic diseases like foot and mouth disease (FMD), more importantly, they will help combat Johne's disease, salmonella, cryptosporidia, mycoplasma, and other organisms that are real and ongoing challenges to dairies.

What are the Benefits of a Biosecurity Program?

Food producers across the nation are reassessing security within their operations, and it makes good business sense for dairy producers to examine and enhance biosecurity on their farms. The intentional or unintentional introduction of diseases such as FMD would be devastating to our livestock industry. Effective biosecurity will not only help protect your dairy against exotic diseases, toxins, and chemicals, but also improve herd health and increase production.



Who is Responsible for Biosecurity?

The producer is ultimately responsible for the biosecurity on their farm. No one knows the operation better than the producer. These programs require planning, commitment, and education of all personnel in the operation. Producers must weigh the risks of a potential disease, and its harm to people and animals, against the costs of prevention. There is no "one size fits all" program, but there are guidelines available to assist producers in developing and implementing the program that will best protect their operation and investment.

Site Specific-Solutions

A reasonable solution for you may not be the best solution for another dairy and solutions should be dairy-specific. The dairy owner, with help from their veterinarian, can decide which biosecurity solutions or components are necessary to adequately protect the dairy. Dividing biosecurity into focus areas can help identify risks. Some examples are:

1. Traffic Flow:

- **Perimeter Control** - Reduce the number of entry points with fencing or other materials, post warning signs to direct traffic, and/or install gates and locks.
- **Vehicles** - Establish routes at your dairy that avoid animal areas and are specific to the business of the visitor or service person. Create parking areas that are away from animals, are easily maintained, and are well lit. Encourage visitors, service personnel, and employees to arrive in clean vehicles.
- **Services and Delivery** - Advise service and delivery personnel that you have a biosecurity program that they must follow while at your dairy.
- **Visitors** - Inform visitors and government inspectors that you have a biosecurity policy with which they must comply, and avoid travelers who have recently been abroad.

2. Milk-House and Parlor - Secure or lock the bulk tank or milk-house. Limit access to the parlor area, particularly at night, and improve lighting in the area.

3. Employees - Employees must follow and enforce your biosecurity guidelines and report visitors or anyone not complying. Employees responsible for using feed additives, livestock drugs or farm chemicals should have adequate training on their use and storage to prevent product misuse.



4. Animals - Isolate and monitor the health of new animals prior to introducing them to the herd. Monitor herd health closely and promptly involve your veterinarian and other resources, including the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), if there are unusual signs of illness, production or consumption losses, or sudden increases in illness or deaths.

Establish collection points for rendering trucks and haulers that are on the perimeter of the dairy and away from stock. Establish handling and processing practices that reduce the risk of spreading disease among production groups.

5. Feed Storage and Water - Feed storage should not be easily seen or accessible to strangers. Rodent and wildlife contamination can be limited via resistant-storage methods. Wells and water sources should be protected from intentional tampering and accidental contamination by wastewater and manure.

6. Chemical Storage - Farm chemicals, feed additives, and livestock drugs should be stored in secured areas away from animals and feed.

7. Emergency Reporting Procedures - Post emergency phone numbers and train employees on your emergency reporting procedures. Call your veterinarian or local CDFA Animal Health Office if you see unusual illnesses. For concerns about milk safety, call the nearest CDFA Milk and Dairy Food Regional Office or your local milk inspector.



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For more information, please click the following:

[Animal Health Branch](#)
[Milk and Dairy Food Safety Branch](#)
[Hand Washing Why, When, How, and with What?](#)
[Foreign Traveler Biosecurity Tips Best Practices for Producers](#)

Additional Resources for Developing a Biosecurity Program:

[Dairy Quality Assurance Program](#)
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References

1. *FAD PreP/NAHEMS Guidelines: Biosecurity*. United States Department of Agriculture Animal Plant Health Inspection Services Veterinary Services. June 2013.