

Protecting Our Livestock and Poultry Industries: Biosecurity Tips

An outbreak of a foreign animal disease in the United States could seriously damage the domestic livestock and poultry industries. For example, eradication of a highly pathogenic avian influenza in the United States, following an outbreak in 1983–84, resulted in the destruction of more than 17 million birds and cost taxpayers nearly \$65 million.

Keeping these serious animal diseases out of the United States is the responsibility of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) Veterinary Services (VS) unit. Within VS, the Emergency Programs (EP) staff provides expertise on exotic animal diseases, ensures adequate disease surveillance within the United States, maintains a high level of emergency preparedness, and provides the needed resources to respond and eliminate disease outbreaks in the United States and its territories.

In order to effectively protect against such outbreaks, EP needs the help of veterinarians, livestock producers, and State and local governments. The following do's and don'ts provide some basic tips for you to help prevent exotic disease outbreaks.

Guard Against Dangerous Foreign Animal Diseases

If you are one of the following, you need to guard against foreign animal diseases:

- A livestock or poultry industry event planner,
- A livestock or poultry producer,
- An animal industry worker,
- An animal health official,
- A food processor, or
- A foreign traveler or a local host expecting foreign visitors.

Examples of dangerous foreign animal diseases you need to guard against include foot-and-mouth disease, hog cholera, swine vesicular disease, African swine fever, vesicular stomatitis, rinderpest, avian influenza, exotic Newcastle disease, and sheep pox.

Do Not Bring Dangerous Foreign Animal Diseases Home With You

Don't:

- Contaminate your person, clothing, or equipment at foreign fairs, zoos, or other livestock or poultry events.
- Wear items, such as jewelry, watches, glasses, or hairpieces, when working around animals, since these items cannot be successfully disinfected.
- Bring back meat or animal products or equipment used around foreign livestock or poultry.

Do:

- Wear disposable boots or rubber boots that can be disinfected, if you must visit farms.
- Avoid livestock and poultry for at least 10 days after you leave foreign soil.
- Wash clothing and footwear using an APHIS-approved disinfectant after contact with foreign livestock or poultry.
- Clean nostrils and fingernails and wash hair thoroughly after contact with foreign livestock or poultry.
- Dispose of clothing, shoes, equipment, cameras, and other items that are difficult or impossible to disinfect.
- Maintain modern production practices at your livestock or poultry facility that exclude diseases from flocks or herds, such as isolation and quarantine of new stock and all-in, all out production.
- Require, demand, and teach biosecurity to family, employees, and all visitors coming into, or involved with, your livestock or poultry production area.

Encourage Foreign Visitors To Follow Commonsense Biosecurity Precautions

Don't:

- Allow friends or domestic or foreign visitors in your livestock or poultry production area unless absolutely necessary.

Do:

- Set an example for visitors, family members, and employees—be the first to follow biosecurity precautions.
- Keep clean clothing and footwear available for visitors to wear if they must be around your livestock or poultry.
- Provide shower-in, shower-out facilities if possible.
- Discourage handling of animals by all visitors.
- Make sure no animal products of foreign origin or contaminated equipment are brought onto your property.
- Ask foreign visitors to provide information about farm and animal contacts.
- Report serious or unusual animal health problems to your veterinarian or State or Federal animal health officials.

Additional Information

For more information on how to protect your livestock and poultry from dangerous foreign animal diseases, contact:

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