

FARM BIOSECURITY & FOOT AND MOUTH PRECAUTIONS

1. Keep Livestock Separate

Where possible, try to keep an empty field, river, woods or road between groups of livestock. Talk to your neighbour to co-ordinate the grazing of boundary fields and check fences are secure, consider double fencing with at least a six foot gap between fences. Effective disease security is dependant on intact and secure fences and hedges.

2. Keep Yourself Clean

Because disease causing organisms can stick to clothes footwear and hands it is essential that all these things are washed and where possible, disinfected when you move between groups of livestock.

If all your animals are at one location keep a set of clothing or overalls to wear when working with them. If you have livestock at different locations and one person cares for them, keep separate outerwear and footwear for each group.

Overalls should be freshly washed (using the hottest wash the material will stand) before they are worn near a different group of animals.

If you wear waterproof overalls, wash off all the dirt before brushing or spraying on disinfectant.

Never wear work clothes when you leave the premises, especially if you're going anywhere near livestock or even other people who may keep livestock.

Remove all mud and dung from footwear and apply an approved disinfectant. There is no point using disinfectant on dirty boots. Make sure all traces of dirt are removed from the tread of your soles before disinfection. If you use a footbath, keep it covered so rain doesn't dilute the disinfectant, make sure it stays clean and ensure the disinfectant is changed regularly.

After handling animals, and when you've finished cleaning and disinfecting clothing,

footwear, vehicles and equipment, wash your hands with soap and water.

All these measures must be undertaken before handling another group of animals.

If you've been near other livestock or livestock farmers away from your farm, you must change your clothes and footwear again when you get back and certainly before you visit your own animals.

3. Keep Your Farm Secure

A major threat to your livestock is close contact with visitors, especially if visitors have had recent contact with other livestock. You may not know where visitors and their vehicles have been so you must ensure that they also follow your biosecurity measures for both the vehicle and themselves.

To make this as easy as possible, the proper equipment including brushes, hoses, water and disinfectant should be readily available at the farm entrance(s).

Your animals may be incubating disease without showing any signs, so these precautions are vital for preventing the inadvertent spread of infection to and from your farm.

Make sure your boundaries are secure as straying animals could carry infection to and from your stock. Check fences, hedges, walls and gates regularly.

To help reduce the risk of disease being brought onto your farm, use signs to advise visitors what you are doing to protect your stock. Use signs to warn visitors to keep away from buildings that house stock. Visitors should also be warned off pastures for a month either side of the grazing period.

4. Keep Unnecessary Vehicles Away

Vehicles, including quad bikes, tractors, trailers, pick-ups, four wheel drives, Lorries and cars could transfer infection more quickly than anything else. Infected material can be carried anywhere on the vehicle, its load as well as the drivers hands, clothes and footwear. It's not just the obvious places where infection could be carried like tyres but also the underside, seats cab, bed of the trailer, loader or spare tyre.

To reduce the risk, only make essential journeys and if possible try to use another vehicle to visit distant stock. Without endangering yourself or others try to avoid driving through dung, slurry or manure on the road. Similarly, if any material falls from your vehicle then, if possible, sweep it off the road so it can't be picked up by other vehicles, people or animals and cause disease to spread further.

5. Clean And Disinfect

All vehicles must be cleaned and disinfected before entering and leaving your farm.

Because infective material can be carried anywhere on the vehicle you should check that every part is clear of mud, manure or slurry before applying disinfectant.

If the vehicle is dirty, disinfection doesn't work and infections could be transmitted further. You must therefore clean off all material first.

Make sure you clean the inside of the vehicle as well, including foot-wells, pedals and mats. Clean all areas used for carrying other things like feed, bedding or equipment.

Be sure you clean the wheels and wheel arches carefully and don't forget where the tyres are in contact with the ground. If you're using disinfectant mats in addition to the other measures described then make sure they are kept clean, the disinfectant is renewed regularly and the mat is long enough so that the whole circumference of the tyre is exposed to disinfectant. Bear in mind though that such mats aren't the most

effective way of applying disinfectant especially when there's dirt on the tyres.

Make sure that trailers are properly cleaned and disinfected too.

Don't think efforts are wasted because they're not. They may appear time consuming and you may be tempted to skip the routine. Don't! What you are doing is essential. Be thorough and responsible and it'll pay off in the long run not just for you but for farming and all other rural industries on the Island.

6. Avoid Visiting Other Farms

Avoid visiting other farms as this risks spreading disease. However, if it's unavoidable be sure to take all the precautions talked about above for cleaning disinfecting vehicles, equipment and people.

Take as little onto other farms as possible and if you can wear boots and clothing supplied by them. Leave your dog behind and leave your vehicle at the farm gate.

Relief milkers, stockmen and contractors in particular should follow these precautions.

7. Look For Early Signs Of Foot And Mouth Disease

Keep your eyes open for early signs of the disease as you know your stock better than anyone. Any suspicions that your animals may be affected must be reported to the Department on **685844** immediately.

Make sure you inspect any animals that appear unwell, are off their food or lame. Remember to inspect other animals too.

Carry out regular inspections of as many animals as possible ensuring they are properly restrained and there is plenty of light so that you can check temperatures and examine their mouth, feet and teats.

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