

Biosecurity for Visits to Premises with Farmed Livestock and Poultry (FLP)



Introduction:

This policy is made with reference to the current Defra publication “Biosecurity Guidance to Prevent the Spread of Animal Diseases” available at www.defra.gov.uk.

All the terms used in this policy and protocol use the same definitions as given in the Defra guidance, except that this document refers to “farmed livestock including poultry” (FLP) throughout for consistency, whereas the Defra guidance interchanges terms for livestock and animals potentially causing some confusion.

Biosecurity:

The following definition of biosecurity is given in the Defra publication:

“..... is the prevention of disease causing agents entering or leaving any place where farmed livestock including poultry are present (or have been present recently). It involves a number of measures and protocols to prevent disease causing agents from entering or leaving a property and being spread”.

ADAS Policy: General:

We aim to follow, in a practical manner, current Defra guidance and requirements where they are published and widely available.

The policy in essence is to reduce to an absolute minimum the incidence of staff visiting areas both where they may come into direct contact (defined as hands on, touching or physically handling) with FLP and with areas where FLP have been recently kept.

Unnecessary contact with FLP is to be avoided at all times.

ADAS strives to employ work methods that are designed to minimise where possible the movements of staff, vehicles or equipment into areas where FLP are kept, including fields, buildings, sheds, markets or other meeting areas. This is designed to minimise the potential contamination of people, vehicles and equipment with material that could carry disease – farmyard manure (FYM), slurry and other products.

If direct contact with FLP or areas where they have recently been left cannot be prevented, then ADAS staff will cleanse and/or disinfect protective clothing, footwear, equipment, or other items before and after direct contact with the FLP or areas where they have been kept, or use items of disposable protective clothing as detailed below. Vehicles must be kept in a clean state as far as is practicable (this means free from visible soiling etc.).

Staff must follow the protocols and detailed instructions in the associated Code of Practice on the Intranet and err on the side of caution if there is any doubt about coming into direct contact with FLP or where they have been recently been kept.

Staff are provided with supplies of personal protective clothing and other equipment as required.

Protocols:

There are choices of 3 protocols that must be followed by ADAS staff who visit farm premises depending on the foreseeable circumstances. The flow chart in the associated Code of Practice summarises the type of visits and the precautions to be taken on each visit. The type of visit and whether there is disease absent or present determines the measures of biosecurity to be taken according to Defra.

Type A visits – Visits to premises with FLP where there will be direct contact or where they have recently been kept (Protocol 1).

3 Scenarios:

1. In the absence of an outbreak of an Exotic Notifiable Animal Disease.
2. During an outbreak of an Exotic Notifiable Animal Disease.
3. Premises under specific disease control restrictions.

Type B visits - Visits to premises with FLP with no foreseeable direct contact with FLP or where they have recently been kept (Protocol 2).

3 Scenarios:

1. In the absence of an outbreak of an Exotic Notifiable Animal Disease.
2. During an outbreak of an Exotic Notifiable Animal Disease.
3. Premises under specific disease control restrictions.

Type C visits - Visits to premises within Restricted Infected Areas (RIA): Mandatory precautions (Protocol 3).

There are compulsory biosecurity measures that must be adopted when a RIA has been declared; these are legal requirements and their breach could result in prosecution of the individual and penalty.

Health and Safety Implications:

1. Close contact with FLP increases the risk of contracting zoonoses. The Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required will reduce such risks when combined with strict personal hygiene i.e. washing, not eating, drinking or smoking whilst in close proximity to farmed livestock including poultry or where they may have been kept.
2. Livestock can cause injuries to handlers or those in attendance. Safety footwear may be appropriate particularly when handling livestock or in close proximity to large farmed livestock.
3. Disinfectants must be stored, transported, handled, used and disposed of safely. Data sheets should be consulted for specific precautions to be taken; most are held on the web sites of the manufacturers/suppliers for reference. It is advisable to use the on-farm facilities if they exist (depending on the type of farm visit (see above)).
4. The preferred disinfectant is FAM but there are many alternatives available. The lists are available on the Defra website (there are different lists for England, Scotland and Wales). FAM is corrosive in certain circumstances and its repeated/long term use on equipment can be detrimental.
5. A valid CoSHH assessment will be needed for the use of disinfectants.



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