

Taking an Integrated Approach to Farm Planning:

Module 3: Biosecurity

Biosecurity

Good biosecurity management is critical to the farm business. Whether it is growing plants or livestock, managing a property's biosecurity reduces the risk of diseases, plant and animal pests and organisms from entering the property or being passed on to other properties. Biosecurity is about protecting your business – land, produce, livestock, and New Zealand's reputation as a safe primary producer.

Do you know what the Good Farm Plan for biosecurity is?

1. Everyone understands their role in protecting the property
2. The property boundary is identified and secure
3. Risks from people and equipment movements are controlled
4. Animals and plants are managed to prevent the spread of pests and diseases
5. New or emerging biosecurity threats are identified, contained, and reported.

These principles are discussed in more detail in the *Good Farm Plan* [here](#).

This plan can be used in conjunction with other Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) modules to form a whole-of-farm plan, or you can use it to supplement your already existing farm plan (such as one you might have as part of your industry assurance programme).



Step 1: Know your farm, obligations, and goals

What are the key parts of this vision, and the values and goals regarding biosecurity that you want to set to achieve this?

Values and goals:

1. What biosecurity plans do you have in place?
2. Do all staff and visitors understand their role in protecting the property?
3. Where is the designated place for visitors to park when arriving at the farm?
4. Do you have appropriate cleaning facilities for equipment cleaning and disinfection, and is all equipment entering or leaving the property cleaned to prevent cross-contamination?
5. Do you keep a record of livestock movements (NAIT)?
6. Do you know where your plant materials (seeds, forage, compost, etc.) are sourced and do you keep a record?
7. How do you introduce new livestock or plant materials to your farm?
8. Is the property boundary identified and secured – are your fences well maintained?
9. Do all staff and visitors know where they can record any unusual observations that may indicate a biosecurity threat?
10. How do you manage the risk of future incursions?

Knowing your farm and writing down this knowledge can help identify any gaps and risks that might be present and can form a base for the rest of your farm plan.

Have a think through those questions and record what happens in your business here:

Photos can also be a great way to show information about your farm and to highlight any of the work you are already doing. Some of this information may also be easier to record on maps, making it easier to identify potential actions.

Steps 2 & 3: Assess and Develop

Based on your vision, the values and goals you have identified, and the description of your farm's biosecurity measures, what are the risks and opportunities for biosecurity on your farm? This risk assessment matrix helps set out how to highlight areas of your risks:

	Impact				
	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Severe
Very likely	Low-medium	Medium	Medium-high	High	High
Likely	Low	Low-medium	Medium	Medium-high	High
Possible	Low	Low-medium	Medium	Medium-high	Medium-high
Unlikely	Low	Low-medium	Low-medium	Medium	Medium-high
Very unlikely	Low	Low	Low-medium	Medium	Medium

Once you have identified the risk, identify any existing actions already in place to manage this risk and whether they are still appropriate. Do these existing measures do enough to mitigate the risk or maximise the opportunity? If needed, identify new actions to supplement or replace the existing actions. It is also important to record who is responsible for managing these actions and the date these need to be reviewed or completed by.

Use any maps you might have (including any maps you may have pulled together in your basic farm plan) to record where you are implementing any actions. Take photos of the current state to use as a reference point and to highlight any improvement.

Note that you are likely to have more risks than this table provides space for. There is an actions table on page 7 that provides additional tables you can use to make sure all your risks and actions are identified.

For example:

Risk identified	Rating	Existing actions	New actions (if needed)	Due date	Responsible person	Evidence
Damaged fencing around north boundary edge after flood – unsecure boundary.	Low/ medium	Temporary fencing put in place	Reinstall permanent fencing in damaged area.	n/a April 2023	xxx xxx	Site inspection Site inspection
New people, equipment and animals entering property.	High	Posters installed throughout farm on protecting farm from biosecurity risks			xxx	Site inspection
New employees arrive on farm who are unfamiliar with Health and Safety processes.	High	Health and Safety clause is included within contract. Induction in first week, which includes showing new employees around farm and telling them about health and safety procedures.	Implement an employee participation scheme to improve health and safety.	Prior to new employee starting work. First week of employee starting work. February 2023.	xxx xxx xxx	Contract filed. Completed induction paperwork. Regular health and safety meetings, select employees as health and safety representatives.

Risk identified	Rating	Existing actions	New actions (if needed)	Due date	Responsible person	Evidence

Step 4: Monitor

The use of performance measures to track and record progress helps with deciding actions and reporting progress. Record what worked well, what went wrong and why. Take photos to keep record and monitor progress.

Action	Yes/No	Notes
What did you achieve that you were proud of?		
Were there any biosecurity issues?		

Step 5: Review

It is important to review and update your farm plan regularly. Reviews are a 'snapshot' of your operational issues and should be used to improve implementation. This is a good opportunity to involve farm staff to help identify challenges and find new solutions. What, if anything, would you change and why?

Question	Notes
Are we doing the right thing?	
Are there better ways to achieve the same results?	
Was there enough time, money, and people to get the job done?	

Notes

Useful links/information

Creating a biosecurity plan for your property is a good way to understand your biosecurity risks and identify simple but effective everyday practices to manage them.

Ko Tātou This Is Us is a great resource for information about biosecurity in Aotearoa New Zealand. The website contains links to different sector-specific sites, as well as information about biosecurity generally.

Biosecurity New Zealand is the main government organisation governing biosecurity. Its website has different information about the importance of biosecurity, as well as the work that the government is undertaking in this area.

Biosecurity New Zealand also hosts the **FarmsOnLine tool**, which you can register with to be alerted swiftly if there's a biosecurity outbreak in your area. You can also use this tool to learn about land use in your area, and to get a detailed view of your farm.

AgPest is a free tool to assist New Zealand farmers and agricultural professionals in decision-making regarding weed and pest identification, biology, impact, and management.

Beef + Lamb New Zealand has information on specific biosecurity areas for sheep and cattle farmers, including animal health and management and pest control.

DairyNZ has a wealth of great resources for all animal agriculture, with advice on how to evaluate and manage biosecurity risks on-farm. Its **Biosecurity Planner** is recommended for use across both the dairy and red meat sectors.

Deer Industry New Zealand has a collection of biosecurity resources in its Deer Hub which are helpful for those in the deer industry.

The Foundation for Arable Research has a wide collection of resources, including the **Arable Biosecurity Risk Register**, to help arable farmers with biosecurity planning.

Horticulture New Zealand has information specific to the horticulture sector, including news about current and potential incursions. It also has a comprehensive **Biosecurity Plan** that you can download.

Morven Action Group have developed a free Farm Biosecurity Action Plan that you can use to develop your own, that clearly sets out key things to think about when considering biosecurity on-farm.

New Zealand Plant Producers Incorporated has information on its website about biosecurity areas of focus, as well as information about current threats to the sector.

New Zealand Wine has vineyard-specific resources, including a vineyard pest and disease identification guide and a vineyard biosecurity plan.

Resources

Protecting Your Farm Checklist – useful for dairy and red meat sector farms.

Protect your farm from disease poster – can be put up in key areas on the farm to highlight useful practices.