

Effective farm wash down facilities

Any time vehicles or machinery come onto your property there is the risk that they will bring unwanted pests, weeds or diseases with them.

Vehicle and equipment movements are inevitable, but there are steps that you can take to reduce the risks they pose. Cleaning machinery and vehicles before they enter production areas will substantially reduce the risk of introducing new pests. Signs are a useful tool to help make visitors aware of your biosecurity requirements.

Pest is a term that covers all insects, mites, snails, nematodes, pathogens (diseases) and weeds that can damage plants or plant products.

A wash down facility is a worthwhile investment. Cleaning vehicles and equipment is time-consuming but it is a measure that will substantially reduce the risk of new pests entering your property.

Features of an effective wash down facility

Ensure that your wash down area:

- Is positioned in an open area close to entry/exit points of the property with clear signs and instructions.
- Is not near any production areas and is spacious enough for large machines to move around.
- Has access to power and high-pressure water for fast and easy cleaning. If power is not available a petrol powered pressure washer could be used instead.
- Has a sealed concrete or bitumen surface. Compacted gravel can also be used but is not ideal as it is harder to keep clean.
- Has a sump or waste water collection area for water, dirt and any plant material to drain into. It's important that this is checked regularly and treated for pests and weeds when necessary.

Three easy steps for an effective wash down:

- 1. Wash down:** Wash all incoming vehicles and machinery using a high pressure water hose to remove any rubbish, plant debris and mud. Pay careful attention to any crevices where mud or plant debris may get trapped including tricky areas like chassis rails, tyre treads and under wheel arches.
- 2. Decontaminate:** Apply a decontaminant solution to all surfaces that have come in contact with mud and dirt. This includes tools, footwear and floor mats. Include foot pedals and other places that have come into contact with footwear. Most decontaminants should stay on the vehicle for 10 minutes but always read chemical labels carefully before use.



Simple signs can help make people aware of your biosecurity requirements



When washing vehicles pay attention to areas where mud can collect, such as wheel arches, chassis rails and tyres



Check tyre tread for weed seeds, mud and plant debris



- 3. Rinse:** Use high pressure water to rinse off the decontaminant. Move the vehicle or machinery off the wash pad to a dry surface. Clean the wash pad down so it is ready for the next vehicle.

For further information about washdown facilities or for farm biosecurity manuals and pest factsheets visit the Plant Health Australia website www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/gfbp, the Farm Biosecurity website www.farmbiosecurity.com.au or contact your states Grain Biosecurity Officer.

If you see anything unusual, call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline

**EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE
1800 084 881**



Apply a decontaminant solution to all surfaces that have come in contact with mud and dirt.



Have a sump or collection area for easy inspection and waste management



Wash down areas should be rinsed off after the vehicle has been cleaned, ready for the next vehicle



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