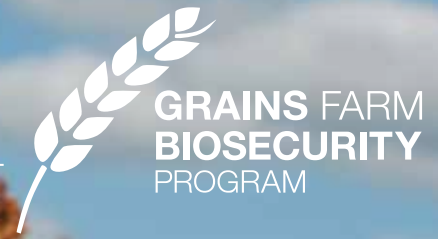


Fact sheet



Is your agronomic business a biosecurity risk?

Field work is integral to an agricultural consultancy/agronomic business, however advisors, consultants, agronomists and other industry personnel should be aware of the farm biosecurity risks associated with field work and the movement between farms. Weed seeds and plant material and soil carrying pests and diseases can easily be carried onto properties on clothes, vehicles and equipment, resulting in management issues long after you've left the property.

Key risks with not implementing biosecurity best practice are:

- introducing an unwanted pest/disease onto a client's property
- spreading pests to other sites and properties.

Managing these risks by ensuring compliance to good biosecurity practice is simple, safeguarding you and your clients.

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

Top 5 biosecurity tips

- 1. Employ a 'keep it clean' policy when conducting field work.**
 - Good hygiene practice is the key to effective farm biosecurity. Apply this to vehicles, machinery, footwear, clothing, equipment and tools.
 - Locate farm wash down facilities and ensure vehicles and equipment are clean before moving to the next property.
- 2. Ensure your 'contractual agreement' with the property owner is detailed.**
 - Ask owner what they want/expect and how you can assist each other – identify the risks and outline how they will be managed to safeguard the property.
 - a. Are there any declared pests, quarantined areas or other issues on the property that may require extra vigilance?
 - b. Are there any specific priority biosecurity requirements such as:
 - is there a farm plan with designated roadways to the site?
 - are there requirements for farm vehicle use?
 - is there a designated parking area?
 - what are the procedures for notifying the grower as you enter and leave the site?
- 3. Ensure compliance by all involved.**
 - Review, evaluate and update existing biosecurity practices/protocols for field work to ensure they remain relevant. Incorporate standard protocols into staff induction packages, and ensure employees are aware of specific requirements of individual clients.





Basic vehicle biosecurity kit

- Stiff brushes and a scraper for cleaning boots and equipment
- Dustpan and brush
- Rubber boots or boot covers or spare pair of boots instead
- Disposable gloves
- Plastic tray and/or a bucket (for use as a footbath and to clean equipment)
- Detergent or disinfectant (sufficient amount for cleaning equipment and boots)
- Hand sanitiser or hand wash
- Strong plastic bags for disposable items/dirty clothing/shoes
- 5 L water.

Other items for a more advanced biosecurity kit

- Small hand sprayer with methylated spirits or ethanol (70%)
- Flagging tape and pegs to mark location of a suspect new pest
- Plastic sample bags and permanent markers to collect samples
- Sample jars and paper bags to collect samples.



4. Carry a vehicle biosecurity kit at all times.

- Contents include provisions for cleaning hands, boots, clothing, equipment and vehicle interior; disposable overalls; spare shoes; disinfectant solution. Incorporate a foot bath prior to site access and departure.

5. Keep a record of all farm visits by employees.

This allows for trace forward and trace back in the case of a pest incursion, facilitating the management or eradication response.

What do you risk by not considering farm biosecurity

- Introduction of a new pest to an area with associated control and management issues (possibly long term).
- Negative feedback for you and your organisation.
- Failure to take on responsibility and 'duty of care'.

Become biosecurity aware when conducting agronomic consultancy – remember you are at the forefront of good biosecurity practice.

For more information on biosecurity, contact your State Grains Biosecurity Officer.

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



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