



Australian Government
**Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry**

BIOSECURITY GUIDELINES FOR
EXHIBITION
POULTRY

LOG BOOK FOR INDIVIDUALS

BIOSECURITY

EXHIBITION
POULTRY

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FORESTRY



BIOSECURITY

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EXHIBITION
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INTRODUCTION

Exhibiting or showing poultry is a popular recreational activity in Australia enjoyed by people of all ages. Bird shows are a great opportunity for stud breeders and exhibitors to preserve the gene pool of pure breeds, compete for coveted titles and demonstrate the best that different breeds have to offer.

However, any gathering of birds carries the risk of spreading disease, particularly where there is close contact between birds from different flocks. Given the highly mobile nature of our community, with many exhibitors travelling long distances to different poultry shows across the country, our activities carry a real potential for quickly and easily spreading any diseases that might be present.

What is biosecurity?

'Biosecurity' describes the systems put in place to protect people, animals and ecological systems against disease and other biological threats. Biosecurity is achieved through the practices that aim to prevent the entry, establishment and spread of diseases.

Definitions

Poultry: in keeping with the National Farm Biosecurity Manual for Poultry Production, the term poultry as used throughout this manual is defined as: 'Chickens, turkeys, guinea fowl, ducks, geese, quails, pigeons, pheasants, partridges, ostriches and emus reared or kept in captivity'.

Good Practice: covers all aspects of husbandry involved in breeding and exhibiting poultry.





GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUALS

How can I protect my birds from disease?

Having good biosecurity measures in place is the key to avoiding pest and disease incursions on your property.

The following eight simple steps will help prevent disease outbreaks in your poultry.

1. Keep your equipment and poultry yard clean

- » Remove litter, sand and grit from the aviary between batches of birds, and every 12 months for deep litter
- » thoroughly clean concrete floors, walls and wire netting with soapy water, and disinfect as needed
- » clean and disinfect feed and water containers regularly
- » don't share equipment with other poultry keepers, unless it has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected
- » clean and disinfect poultry transport cages before and after use, and always use fresh bedding
- » keep feeding areas clean and free of excess grain to reduce the attraction of your poultry housing to wild birds and rodents.

Disease-causing organisms, such as bacteria, viruses, protozoa, internal parasites (such as worms) and external parasites (such as ticks and lice), can accumulate in poultry housing over time. While resident adult birds may develop some resistance or immunity to these disease agents, newly introduced birds and young chicks might be highly susceptible to disease. Even resident adult birds may become sick if disease agents build up too much over time. Therefore, periodic cleaning is advisable to reduce this accumulation of disease-causing organisms.

2. Avoid contact between your poultry and wild birds

- » prevent contact with wild birds by restricting access to open ponds, lakes and creeks – protective netting can also help prevent wild birds from entering domestic bird areas
- » clean up surrounding areas to reduce shelter and hiding places for wild birds
- » if you own ducks, you should also try and keep them separated from your other birds.

Wild birds can carry bacteria and viruses that can cause disease in your flock. These disease agents may be transferred to your birds by direct contact or indirectly via bird droppings contaminating the ground, water or feed.

Waterfowl may carry viruses that don't affect them but may cause illness in chickens. If possible, it is best to keep waterfowl and other poultry separate to avoid transfer of viruses between species.

3. Don't let feed and water become contaminated by bird droppings (faeces) or other animal waste

- » ensure water supplied to poultry is from a chlorinated mains water supply, a microbiologically clean bore, or treated with chlorine if these sources aren't available
- » don't allow wild birds or pest animals to contaminate your poultry feed - store it in a container with tight fitting lid.

Water coming from a municipal (mains) water supply has already been treated and is ready for use by poultry. Information on sanitising other sources of water for poultry can be found in the National Water Biosecurity Manual Poultry Production (available from www.daff.gov.au/birds). However, you should seek expert advice before adding chemicals to water used for poultry.

4. If you go to shows practice good hygiene

- » if there are signs of illness in your flock, do not take any birds to a show, even those that appear well
- » all bird equipment and permanent carrying containers should be cleaned and disinfected before and after a show
- » while at the show, exhibitors should not handle birds other than their own, but if this is necessary, exhibitors should always thoroughly wash their hands between birds
- » keep a register of all bird movements in and out of your premises, particularly to shows.

When an infectious disease is present in a flock, it may not affect all birds equally. Some birds may appear obviously unwell, while others appear to be unaffected. Apparently unaffected birds may still carry a disease agent, however, and should not be taken to shows where the disease could spread.

5. Limit visitors to your birds

- » restrict access to bird areas
- » ask visitors to put on clean protective clothing and use foot-baths containing appropriate disinfectants at the entrance to bird areas or sheds
- » keep a record of visitors.

Some disease agents, including viruses, can remain infectious on clothes and other equipment for a week or more. Visitors who have handled birds may carry such disease agents on their clothes or shoes.

6. Quarantine new birds and birds returning home from shows

- » separate and monitor new poultry for at least 30 days before introducing them to your existing flock
- » always source your poultry from a reputable producer or breeder whose poultry health status is known
- » always buy healthy looking poultry
- » feed and clean quarantined poultry after you have tended to other poultry
- » Birds returning home from shows should be quarantined away from the main flock for a period of at least two weeks.

Birds may not appear sick during the early stages of an infectious disease. Therefore it is best to keep new birds separate for a while to ensure they don't develop signs of disease, before exposing your whole flock to them.

Birds that have been to shows or sales could pick up an infection and bring it home with them. Try to keep these birds separate from your main flock, if practical, until you are sure that they have remained well.

7. Know the signs of disease

- » swollen head
- » dullness
- » drop in egg production
- » respiratory distress (gaspings, coughing, sneezing)
- » diarrhoea
- » loss of appetite
- » sudden death of several or more birds.

Other potential signs include:

- » reluctance to move, eat or drink
- » droopy or 'fluffed-up' appearance
- » inability to walk or stand
- » unusual head and neck posture.

Seek advice if you see signs of illness in your flock, especially if you have recently introduced birds or returned from a bird show.

8. Immediately report any sick or dead poultry

- » If you see any unusual symptoms in your birds or if you find that a number of them have died within a short period of time, be on the safe side and report it immediately to your local veterinarian, Department of Primary Industries or the **Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline** on **1800 675 888**. It is essential that any suspected disease outbreak be reported immediately!

Quick containment of any emergency disease will reduce the impact on:

- » Exhibition stud poultry
- » the health of other birds - including native species
- » Australia's poultry meat and egg industries which contribute enormously to Australia's economy
- » the environment
- » human health.

For further biosecurity information contact your local veterinary surgeon, or Department of Primary Industries or Agriculture in your state or territory.

Individual biosecurity plans

Individuals should:

- » Have a comprehensive Biosecurity plan, based upon the guidance provided above
- » Develop a biosecurity checklist that is reviewed and updated regularly
- » Keep a journal of all matters concerned with biosecurity.

Neighbours with ‘backyard chooks’

People with backyard poultry adopt variable biosecurity measures, and may be less fastidious about keeping things clean and introducing new birds than poultry exhibitors. This can lead to a dilemma for some registered individuals with higher standards of biosecurity. Remember, the best way to protect YOUR birds is to improve your own biosecurity using the 8 principles outlined above. This will help to exclude disease that might be present in neighbouring flocks.

Developing a positive relationship with neighbours is important. Leading the neighbour to appreciate that good practice will be mutually beneficial is most important. Explaining biosecurity and providing assistance through literature and other material in a non-threatening way may encourage the neighbour to practice good biosecurity.



APPENDIX – FORMS

The plan for this property

Outline some of the specific strategies that have been introduced to complement some issues raised in the 8 points on pages 3-6.

Disease control program

| Date | Disease | Vaccination administered | Comments |
|------|---------|--------------------------|----------|
| | | | _____ |
| | | | _____ |
| | | | _____ |

| Date | Internal parasite | Treatment | Comments |
|------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| | | | _____ |
| | | | _____ |
| | | | _____ |

| Date | External parasite | Treatment | Comments |
|------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| | | | _____ |
| | | | _____ |
| | | | _____ |

| Date | Other treatments / medications | Date | Incidents requiring veterinary attention |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Reporting of dead or sick poultry | | Name of person to whom disease was reported, and any other pertinent information | |
| Date | | _____ | |
| | | _____ | |

Show log

| Date | Show | Comments (include quarantine) |
|------|------|-------------------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Quarantine of introduced birds log

| Date | Source of new stock | End date | Comments |
|------|---------------------|----------|----------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
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| | | | |
| | | | |



Visitors log

As a security safeguard do not let visitors step into your pens to inspect or catch birds. Catch the birds yourself and hand them to the visitor outside the pen. Practice hygiene, wash hands etc.

| Date | Visitors name, address, contact number | Poultry contact in last 36 hours | Reason for visit |
|-------|--|----------------------------------|------------------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Rodent log

| Date | Time | Bait station site and level | Activity level | Corrective action / comments |
|-------|-------|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |



Management log

Anecdotal comments on issues raised

| Issue | Comment |
|-------|---------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Incidental review of biosecurity programme

| Date | Positive outcomes | Areas of concern and action planned |
|-------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

Other comments

| Date | Comments |
|------|----------|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Other information

Devise any other records that you might consider useful to your biosecurity plan



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A close-up photograph of several feathers. The top portion shows a blurred black feather and a vibrant red feather. The bottom portion shows a sharp black feather with fine barbs, and a red feather below it. The background is a plain, bright white.

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