



## Biosecurity for Small Poultry Flocks

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Small poultry flock owners must be aware of the risk from diseases, to their birds and to surrounding commercial flocks. Biosecurity refers to the proactive measures taken to keep diseases out of animal/bird populations where they do not already exist and preventing the spread of disease to other flocks. Owners of small poultry flocks can develop simple but effective biosecurity plans to protect their flocks. The key components of a small flock biosecurity plan are:

### 1. New Stock

- a. Obtain birds and/or eggs from reliable sources and if possible, from a single source.
- b. Know the health status of the farm/hatchery you are buying from.
- c. Obtain health certificates whenever possible.
- d. Birds should all be the same age. If not possible, group according to age and keep separate.

### 2. Quarantine

- a. Birds should be quarantined for 2-4 weeks before mixing with existing stock.
- b. The quarantine area should be in a separate building or area to prevent any direct bird to bird contact.
- c. Observe the birds for any abnormal behavior. Birds showing abnormal behavior should be submitted to the NSDA Hancock Laboratory for post mortem examination.

### 3. Housing and Yard Maintenance

- a. The flock area or pen should be cleaned and disinfected at least once per year.
- b. Use disinfectants when temperatures are above 15 C.
- c. Prevent pests and rodents by:
  - i. Keeping area around pens debris free
  - ii. Cutting the grass short
  - iii. Draining standing water
  - iv. Keeping feed in tightly closed containers
  - v. Cleaning up spilled feed
- d. Standing water should be drained.
- e. Keep feed in tightly closed containers. Clean up spilled feed.
- f. Clean drinkers regularly and sanitize.
- g. Do not use surface water (ponds, lakes, etc.) for drinking water unless it is treated (chlorine).

4. **Work Flow & Personal Hygiene**
  - a. The flock owner should have separate clothing and footwear for working around the flock. Keep at the barn entrance/exit.
  - b. Wash hands with soap and warm water before entering and after leaving the flock area.
  - c. Work with the youngest birds first.
  
5. **Visitors/ Service Personnel**
  - a. Visitors should not be allowed.
  - b. Any visitors allowed should follow personal sanitation procedures prior to entering pen.
  - c. All service personnel should wear clean coveralls and boots.
  - d. Keeping a '*Visitor Log Book*' is recommended.
  - e. Post "*Biosecurity*" and "*No Entry*" signs on entrance doors.
  
6. **Vehicles & Equipment**
  - a. All equipment that comes into contact with poultry should be cleaned and disinfected after every use.
  - b. Do not share equipment with other poultry owners.
  
7. **Bird Health**
  - a. Contact your poultry veterinarian if your birds appear sick, mortality is high, or if there is a sudden drop in egg quality or production.
  - b. Birds exhibiting signs of illness or sudden changes in production should be sent to the NSDA Hancock Laboratory for post mortem examination.
  
8. **Wild Bird Contact**
  - a. Prevent contact with wild birds.
  - b. Keep poultry inside or in a fenced in yard with overhead netting.
  
9. **Records**
  - a. Keep records detailing the source of the birds, health observations and any vaccinations.
  - b. Regularly review and follow your biosecurity plan.

For more information, please contact:

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