

State of North Carolina
Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Michael F. Easley, Governor
William G. Ross Jr., Secretary



September 30, 2008

TO: Divisions of Water Quality and Soil & Water Conservation Staff

FROM: Coleen Sullins, Director, Division of Water Quality
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Pat Harris, Director, Division of Soil & Water Conservation

SUBJECT: Biosecurity Guidelines for Site Visits of Livestock Farms

Animal diseases have a substantial economic impact on the livestock industry in North Carolina. Many animal diseases are contagious and while they may not affect humans, diseases can be transmitted by people through contact with contaminated clothing, vehicles and equipment. In order to protect herd health while visiting farm sites, DWQ and DSWC personnel are directed to follow these guidelines:

General

- Inspections and operation reviews should not be conducted within 14 days of returning from travel outside of North America.
- Vehicle should be parked at least 50 ft. from animal housing and dead box or burial sites and not downwind from ventilation fans when possible. Care should be exercised when the farm office is located near animal buildings.
- Inspector should minimize working near animal housing unless there is a suspected violation.
- Vehicle should be disinfected before leaving the farm. Spray the tires, fenders and vehicle undercarriage with disinfecting solution.
- Rubber boots or disposal boot covers should be worn during the entire site visit. Boots should be disinfected with solution before leaving facility. Care must be taken not to tear the disposable boot covers and replaced immediately when torn. Disposable boot covers should be left on site. In the absence of a disposal container, boot covers may be placed in a plastic bag for disposal off-site.
- Hands should be washed using disinfectant solution or hand sanitizers/wipes before leaving farm. Wipes, plastic gloves, etc. should be left for disposal on site if possible. In the absence of a disposal container, wipes or gloves may be placed in a plastic bag for disposal off-site.
- Any equipment (e.g. sampling devices) should be cleaned or rinsed with fresh water on site immediately after use. (Note: "Vircon" disinfectant may damage meters.)
- Only use disinfectants as approved by the State Veterinarian's Office.
- Keep a log of visited sites for tracking purposes should a disease outbreak occur.

After inspecting a facility that has been diagnosed with a contagious disease or potential disease, and before visiting the next "clean" farm:

- Observe a minimum 48-hour *downtime* (preferably 72 hrs.) with no site visits to occur during *downtime* period.
- Vehicle must be disinfected before leaving the farm. Spray the tires, fenders and vehicle undercarriage with disinfecting solution.
- The vehicle's exterior must be washed and interior vacuumed prior to visiting the next "clean" farm.

Denial of Access

An individual farm may require additional biosecurity measures. The Animal Waste State and NPDES permits authorize access to the facility by DENR personnel in accordance "with reasonable and appropriate biosecurity measures." Follow Regional procedures if denial of access occurs.

Scheduling

- For swine operations, schedule routine site visits within the Integrators' production pyramids. Start with sow farms (farrow to wean, farrow to feeder, etc.), followed by nurseries (wean to feeder) and then finishing units (feeder to finish). Multiplier and mother-daughter nucleus units should always be inspected first.
- Inspectors should allow for a 48-hour *down time* for routine site visits between Integrators.
- When scheduling inspections with the farm owner or company contact person, the Inspector should inquire about the disease status of the farm(s) and schedule site visits accordingly. Most Integrators (including poultry) maintain a "hot list" of farms suspected of or currently experiencing a disease outbreak. Additionally, the State Veterinarian maintains a list of "reportable diseases." Some diseases of concern are TGE, PRRS, Salmonella, Avian Influenza, New Castle's Disease, and potentially Foot and Mouth disease. Schedule site visits to allow sufficient *downtime* after visiting infected farms.

Non-routine Site Visits (e.g. response to complaint)

Situations will arise when DENR personnel cannot adhere to the aforementioned biosecurity measures such as response to a citizen complaint or other information indicating a violation or mitigation of an environmental emergency. Personnel should make every attempt to adhere to the guidelines listed above and, at a minimum, will disinfect vehicle before entering and exiting facility and wear disinfected rubber boots or plastic covers while on site.

These biosecurity measures will be updated as needed and under the guidelines of the State Veterinarian's Office.

cc: Robin Smith, DENR Assistant Secretary
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