



# VISITORS

PLEASE RESPECT  
**FARM BIOSECURITY**

Please phone before entering

fact sheet

## Your biosecurity responsibility

information for researchers, extension officers and farm visitors

Farm biosecurity plays a critical role in protecting the Australian cotton industry from the entry, establishment and impact of exotic pests, weeds and diseases as well as the movement of endemics between farms and regions.

Legislation under the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015, QLD Biosecurity Act 2014 and other relevant Australian state and territory legislation supports biosecurity management as a shared responsibility. This means that all farm visitors, including researchers, extension officers, industry and general visitors, are responsible for managing biosecurity risks that are under their control, that they know about, or should reasonably be expected to know about.

It is crucial that people visiting farms take an active role in preparing for their visit, including managing pests, weeds and diseases. The day-to-day activities of researchers, extension officers and industry members should positively contribute to the protection of farms and the agricultural industry.

On-farm research trials, field days and farm visits are an important component of agricultural research, development and extension; however, these activities can be associated with a number of biosecurity risks. You should assess the risk your activities pose to the spread of the pests, weeds and diseases before you visit farms, and take action to mitigate these biosecurity risks.

### Top biosecurity tips for on-farm research:

**1. Be aware of the growers' biosecurity expectations and plan your biosecurity procedures.**

Ask the grower if they have a biosecurity management plan and their expectations of visitors. Questions to help ensure you fulfil your biosecurity responsibilities include:

- Do you have a wash down facility we can use?
- Are there any pest, weed or pathogen concerns on farm that require extra vigilance?
- Do you have any specific requirements e.g. what is the procedure for notifying the grower or farm manager as you enter and exit the property?

*If the grower has no specific biosecurity requirements, you still have a responsibility to manage the biosecurity risks under your control.*

**2. Employ a 'Keep it Clean' policy when conducting on-farm research.**

Apply this policy to all vehicles, machinery, equipment and footwear going on and off the farm. It is important the policy be adopted by everyone accessing the site.



### 3. A vehicle biosecurity kit.

A biosecurity kit is the simplest way to ensure you are prepared and able to implement hygiene measures. The contents provide provisions for keeping clothing and footwear mud and trash-free.

### 4. Consider the location of your trial site on farm.

If possible, locate the trial site near an access road to reduce the need for on-farm vehicle movement. This also assists with reducing biosecurity risks if field walks are held during the season.

## Top biosecurity tips for field days:

Field days and farm walks provide valuable learning opportunities, however can also present biosecurity risks.

### 1. Incorporate biosecurity messages on field day fliers, invitations and programs.

Incorporating biosecurity messages e.g. 'Remember to Come Clean. Go Clean: please ensure all footwear and vehicles are mud and trash-free' and visible farm biosecurity signs can also act as a reminder of the importance of on-farm biosecurity and any specific requirements at the site.

### 2. Ensure all vehicles are parked in a designated area.

Creating a designated parking area can assist with containing the spread of a new pest or pathogen. Consider using a bus for transportation to reduce the number of vehicles accessing the site. This is particularly important where an extension activity may visit several farms with a group of people.

### 3. Keep an attendance register.

An attendance register allows you to trace forward or back in the event of an introduction of an unwanted pest, weed or disease, particularly an exotic.

### 4. Use a footbath.

Incorporate foot baths at trial site access points; remembering it is not only what visitors could bring into a field, but also what they could take back to their own farm. Footbaths need to be set up appropriately to ensure they do not become a biosecurity risk. Footbaths should be set up on a lawn or hard surface (e.g. concrete, gravel, sealed road). If a footbath is set up on dirt, then provide hessian bags/'mats' to avoid wet boots creating muddy areas. Additionally the footbath solution should be replaced regularly if there are large groups of people are using the footbath to maintain its effectiveness.

## Suspicious pest or symptoms?

Growers and consultants often refer to researchers for assistance in identifying pests or symptoms. A delay in reporting an exotic pest, weed or pathogen could result in a lost opportunity for an effective eradication response.

If you suspect something unusual or spot an exotic pest, weed or disease – call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline: **1800 084 881**.

**EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE**  
**1800 084 881**



### Vehicle biosecurity kit:

- 5L garden sprayer filled with prepared detergent (as per label instructions) with 1L stock bottle of undiluted agricultural detergent to refill sprayer as needed.
- 5L garden sprayer filled with prepared disinfectant (as per label instructions) with 1L stock bottle of undiluted disinfectant to refill sprayer as needed.
- Screw driver or paint scraper to clean the tread of boots.
- Stiff brush to clean out the floor of the vehicle and remove soil stuck to foot deals. A stiff brush can also be used for brushing down clothes after visiting a field with mealybugs.
- Irrigation boots
- Alcohol hand sanitiser
- Flagging tape and pegs to mark the location of suspect symptoms or pest.
- Smart phones can assist with taking photos and marking the location of suspect symptoms or pests – with information easily shared.
- Plastic sample bags, paper bags and permanent markers to collect samples.
- Garbage bags for containing boots, clothing or equipment that needs to be cleaned.
- Supply of surgical theatre boots – optional but extremely handy. These are relatively inexpensive and can be purchased online.

### For convenors of farm walks and field days – add:

- Additional agricultural detergent or disinfectant.
- Tray that would allow a footbath ~5cm deep.
- 2 or 3 substantial hessian bags, or alternatively a supply for surgical theatre boots.
- Field day attendance registration sheet.

### Wash down products: agricultural detergents and disinfectants

There are two different types of products used in washing down: agricultural detergents and agricultural disinfectants. Agricultural detergents (e.g. Bio-Cleanse or most industrial and domestic brands of soaps and detergents) provide optimal soil removal. Agricultural disinfectants (e.g. Path-X, Sporekill, Steri-Max, or products containing quaternary ammonium compounds) are effective against a range of pathogens found on agricultural farms.

To work properly, disinfectant products need to be applied to a surface that has all soil and trash removed. Effective decontamination (wash down) of items involves two steps – (1) cleaning with detergent, followed by (2) disinfection. Product users must also satisfy themselves that the product they choose is appropriate for their situation, ensuring label requirements are read and followed.

For more information on registered wash down products, refer to APVMA's online database search: <https://portal.apvma.gov.au/home>.

### For more:

For more information on your biosecurity requirements, refer to your state or territory agriculture department website.

Does your research require you to work with high-risk biosecurity material or move material interstate? Contact the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment or refer to [www.interstatequarantine.org.au](http://www.interstatequarantine.org.au)

