

Biosecurity Implementation at small and medium poultry farms

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ABSTRACT

Biosecurity: Everyday measures that help minimise the risk of disease entering or spreading through a flock. Infection can be transmitted by new birds or on shoes, crates, vehicles or equipment. Poultry can also be exposed to disease by wild birds. Animals can be protected from these risks by implementing measures that restrict access, provide protection of feed and water, clean equipment, and monitor birds daily, and report any bird, which displays atypical symptoms, immediately. This article explains how these measures can create a practical farm system.

Keywords: Biosecurity, Poultry farms, implementations

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Introduction

A poultry house can be clean yet still be infested with disease agents. A worker may go to another flock and return to the same flock in the same boots. A borrowed crate can contaminate the poultry area. Any food or water available to wild birds is another contact opportunity. The purpose of biosecurity is to interrupt these routes before birds become ill. Movement of birds, as well as contamination of boots, vehicles and equipment, are considered key modes of transmission between farms by the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) [1].

Decide where to put the farm entrance.

Use one door to poultry house and close other doors as possible. Put a signboard to warn the visitors to not enter until the farmer calls. Access to be restricted to those who need to be there for work, and maintain a simple visitors register of names and dates. Supply shoes and outside clothing that do not come onto the farm. Hand must be washed before touching birds or feeding or equipment.

Wherever possible, store equipment in the poultry house. When using crates, weighing equipment or other materials, remove any visible dirt, clean and disinfect with an appropriate disinfectant according to the label before entering. A disinfectant is not very effective in the presence of manure and other organic material on the surface. It's better to create a routine than to start cleaning when birds are ill. Controlling entry, wearing clean clothing and footwear and caring for equipment entering a farm are included in the WOAH poultry biosecurity guidance [2].

Secure feed & water for the flock

Keep feed stored in covered feed containers or a protected room. Clean up spilled feed – wild birds and rodents are attracted by it. If possible, limit wild bird access to poultry house by screens or netting. Place drinkers out of the way, but within easy reach of birds and maintain minimum contamination. Inspect drinkers every day and clear up wet litter around drinkers. Regularly clean feeders and drinkers, not when deposits are visible.

Newly bought birds require special care. Separate them from the rest of the flock for the first few weeks and consult with a vet regarding the health and

appropriate introduction period. If the birds that are mixed in are infected the entire flock may be exposed at once.

Be alert for birds and take action promptly.

Go through the flock daily. Observe the feed intake, activity, respiration, manure and sick or dead birds. Record any rare or unusual observations in order to better identify a developing problem. But symptoms cannot diagnose the cause: there are several poultry diseases with similar symptoms.

When illness occurs in an epidemic or when deaths are occurring at an unusually high rate call a veterinarian or the local livestock authority immediately. Limit bird movement, visitors and equipment until advised otherwise. Do not transfer sick birds to other flocks, or dispose of them by selling them. WOAH highlights early recognition and reporting, in addition to biosecurity, in smallholder poultry systems [3].



Fig. 1. Daily poultry biosecurity routine

Conclusion

The key to poultry biosecurity lies in the consistent action of all involved on the farm, with a few simple steps. Opportunities for disease to spread can be minimised by controlling entry, maintaining clean equipment, providing protection for feed and water and by checking the flock every day. These tasks should be discussed with labourers by the farmers and re-examined if birds are introduced or disease occurs.

References

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