



Cattle Producer's Handbook

Quality Assurance Section

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Biosecurity and Agrosecurity: Protecting Your Cow-Calf Operation from Disease and Agro-terrorism

Kara J. Kraich, M.S., and James J. England, DVM, Ph.D.
University of Idaho

Biosecurity and agrosecurity, to varying degrees, are currently practiced by most operators, which results in a healthier herd and a safer product. A well-defined and documented biosecurity and agrosecurity plan will be a significant factor in assuring your food product—beef—is safe, has high quality, and is wholesome.

Biosecurity is the management practice that protects animals from exposure to infectious agents that can adversely affect the productivity and profit of your enterprise. Biosecurity is defined by the physical and operational characteristics of the system that is being secured! Biosecurity consists of those activities that reduce the opportunities for infectious agents to gain access to, and for movement or spread within, the herd. These activities include properly maintained and cleaned equipment and facilities, pasture rotation, herd health programs, purchase of known source animals, isolation of new additions, proper waste disposal, personnel training (people management), perimeter control (fencing,

BIOSECURITY & AGROSECURITY at a Glance for Cow-Calf Operations

- **Protect against infection:**
Vaccination
Know animal and herd status
- **Reduce exposure to infected animals:**
Add animals of known status
Isolate new additions
Quarantine sick animals
Perimeter control
- **Reduce contamination:**
Pasture management
Waste management
Restrict visitors
- **Sanitation:**
Keep clean
Use disinfectants
Control birds and rodents
- **Train personnel:**
Biosecurity plan
- **Permanent records:**
Individual animal identification
Veterinary records
- **Emergency response plan**

access), record keeping, and individual animal identification (see addendums 1 and 2).

Agrosecurity is the practice that protects operations from outside activities that adversely affect production of feed and foodstuffs, such as intentional introduction of disease or chemicals, or occurrences of natural disaster. Biosecurity is a primary component of agrosecurity at the livestock production level of agricultural practices. Agrosecurity includes biosecurity and an emergency response plan.

Biosecurity for a swine or poultry operation has all the characteristics of a disciplinary facility from chain link fence to staffed guard houses that monitor and control the movement of all personnel, materials, and animals. Generally, beef operations must be open to vehicle traffic and visitors and, therefore, cannot implement biosecurity in the same ways as modern swine and/or poultry operations. However, general biosecurity principles can be incorporated into the modern ranch operation.