

### **Importance of Biosecurity**

Biosecurity, the practice of protecting ranch and farm animals from disease, has become a major concern with the worldwide threat of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and other diseases. Effective biosecurity requires several components including isolation, traffic control, and sanitation that aim to reduce exposure to bacteria, viruses and other organisms that may infect animals with disease.

Alaskan producers are encouraged to maintain a high sense of awareness for unusual occurrences of animal diseases in their communities. Producers need to initiate an appropriate level of biosecurity on their ranches and farms. A good biosecurity program helps to lower the risk of pathogens being transferred from farm to farm.

Informed veterinarians, livestock producers and animal owners are the first line of defense against foreign and other animal diseases.

### **General Potential Signs of Animal Diseases of Concern**

- Sudden, unexplained death loss in the herd or flock.
- Severe illness affecting a high percentage of animals.
- Blistering around an animal's mouth, nose, teats or hooves.
- Unusual ticks or maggots.
- Staggering, falling or central nervous system disorders.
- Abortions or still births

### **Control Access to Your Property**

- Have only one combined entrance and exit to your farm.
- Keep property gates locked at all times.
- Make sure all visitors check with you prior to entering your property or visiting you animals.
- If you have a large number of visitors, keep track of who visits your farm. Make sure all visitors sign in at arrival and sign out at departure.
- Only allow essential vehicles and visitors to enter the farm and keep these vehicles in a separate area.

### **Biosecurity Precautions**

- When a new animal moves onto a farm, be sure that the health status and the source of the animal are known.
- New animals or animals returning to a farm should be separated from the rest of the herd for approximately two weeks. This can be difficult in some cases if you are unable to completely isolate the animals, keep them in a pen or stall farthest from the rest of the stock, keep feed and water buckets or bowls separate, avoid nose to nose contact with other stock. For horses or stock that need to be exercised or worked, remove other animals from the pen, arena or paddock and set up a time for the new stock to have access to the area.
- Keep vehicles, such as milk, feed and livestock trucks, from driving through areas where animals are housed or feed is kept.
- Wash hands thoroughly after handling livestock.
- Exclude foreign visitors from farms for at least five days after arrival in the United States. Ask foreign visitors to provide information about recent farm and animal contacts. Recent outbreaks of Foot and Mouth Disease in several Asian countries are a cause for concern.
- Clothing worn on farms in other countries should be washed and footwear should be disinfected; luggage, camera and other items should be disinfected.
- All footwear should be disinfected before entering and after leaving an animal housing area.
- Discourage foreign visitors from walking through feed mangers and having physical contact with animals.
- Report morbidity and mortality events to your local veterinarian or to State Veterinarian's Office.

### **Provide Disposable Protective Clothing**

- Make sure visitors entering your farm have clean clothes or you can keep a supply of disposable clean coveralls and boots for visitors.
- If you haul your own animals, wash your truck, clean and disinfect boots, and change coveralls before returning to your farm.
- In general don't borrow or share equipment. In cases where there are no other options, clean and disinfect the equipment prior to use and make sure to repeat these steps prior to returning the items.
- If it is necessary to be around the animals of another farm, consider wearing protective clothing such as coveralls, and boots that can be cleaned and disinfected before you enter the property and when you leave.

### **Provide Disinfectant for Incoming Visitors**

- Provide visitors with a tub of disinfectant and a brush for scrubbing shoes for use before they enter your property.
- Vehicles entering and leaving your property should be kept away from animal areas or have their tires washed with disinfectant.

### **Additional Steps**

- Control your cats, dogs and poultry.
- Control pests such as rodents as well as wild life. You want to avoid spreading diseases that these animals may carry.
- Keep garbage and other waste from supplies and animal housing.
- Evaluate feed purchased or brought onto the property and fed to animals.
- Practice security and cleanliness in feed storage to eliminate contamination of feedstuffs.

### **Additional Information**

- Confirmed or suspected cases of foreign and other animal diseases that are transmissible should be reported to:
  - Office of the State Veterinarian (907) 375-8215