



Protect Your Herd: Avoid These Common Biosecurity Mistakes

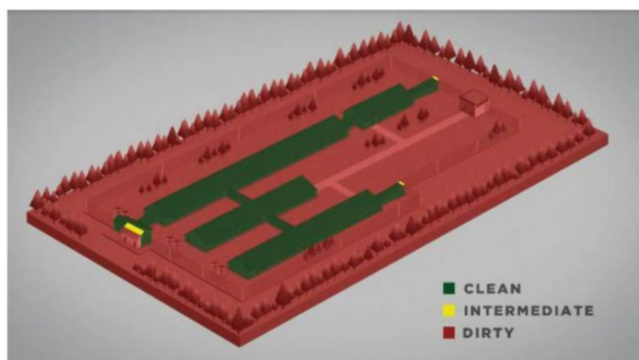
Health risks are always looking for a way into the barn. They are relentless, and your biosecurity practices need to be relentless too. Overlooking just one biosecurity protocol could lead to lost productivity and profit.

The PIC Health Assurance team has been in the field, assisting farm teams to improve [biosecurity implementation](#). As they worked with these teams, they noticed a trend. The same biosecurity breaches kept popping up. Review the list below. Are any of these happening in your facilities?

Clean/Dirty lines not established

There is a fine line between clean and dirty, literally. If clean/dirty lines are unclear or absent, adhering to them is a challenge.

The clean areas include the barns' interior, office and connecting hallways, and all places and equipment in contact with live pigs. The clean area perimeter is a set of physical barriers, including solid walls, cool cells, curtains and doors that protect and define the clean areas within a barn. Doors, showers, decontamination rooms and chutes, which border the dirty areas, are referred to as clean/dirty lines (intermediate). Everything outside of the clean area is considered dirty area.



Nothing may cross the clean/dirty line without an intervention or decontamination protocol. Clean/dirty lines need to be:

- clearly defined
- easy to follow during work routines
- designed to avoid cross-traffic
- strictly respected

Make it easy for the farm team by using high-visibility tape or paint to mark the clean/dirty lines.



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Open for intruders: unlocked external doors and no signage.

Prevent unwanted intruders and retain the clean/dirty line's sanctity with "No Entry" signage and locking external doors. These steps prevent non-farm personnel and unintentional personnel entry from the outside.

Place signs on every external door. The sign should clearly state 'No Entry' in words and visual illustration.



Avoid accidental re-entry and place 'No Re-Entry' signs on the internal doors or clearly mark as "Emergency Exit Only".

Supply entry process confusion. What's disinfected and what isn't?

Avoid confusion with clear protocols. Post the supplies and equipment entry protocol on both the supply entry room's dirty and clean side. Remember, supplies entering the farm should be kept to a minimum.

All approved items must either:

1. Pass through the fumigation room
2. Be disinfected at the pass-through window with disinfectant spray or wipes with 10-minutes minimum contact time
3. Pass through a UV light chamber (254 nm wavelength) with 10-minutes minimum exposure time

Adding a fumigation log will reduce confusion, too. The log should include: initials of the person bringing in supplies, a brief description of the supplies, date/time placed in fumigation room, and date/time entered into the farm

Free-pass through the pass-through window

Items entering through the pass-through window do not get a free-pass from biosecurity measures. As mentioned above, all items entering the farm need disinfection. This includes the pass-through window. Make it easy for your team. Display the pass-through window disinfection protocols and have the necessary disinfection supplies available at the pass-through point so the team follows the protocol.

Empty or missing bait stations.

Bait stations usually fall victim to a set and forget— service bait stations, internally and externally, at least monthly. Designate a farm staff member to manage internal bait stations on the same day each month. The easiest way to manage external bait stations and pest management is to hire a professional service.

However, if farm staff are also responsible for external bait stations, place bait stations every 50 feet around the facilities (barns/buildings) and the mortality disposal area.



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Damaged feed lines and feed spills

Feed spills are a pest magnet. Pests such as rodents and birds are known to be vectors for carrying diseases. Feed spills should be cleaned up promptly, or at a minimum daily, to prevent attractant to birds, wildlife, rodents, and other varmints (including feral pigs!). Preventing feed spills or cleaning them promptly, constitutes less of a risk of attracting varmints to the farm to potentially spread disease.

Mortality disposal mistakes

Mortality is an expected part of animal production. Carcasses, tissues and fluids carry pathogens. Contain those risks with farm-specific mortality collection and removal protocols. The area for most improvement in mortality management is the disposal area. Take a look at the disposal area. Are strategies in place to mitigate wildlife, fowl and rodent attraction? Is the composting area fully enclosed and covered? Like bait stations, designate a team member to check the disposal area regularly.

Biosecurity resources

The primary focus of the PIC Health Assurance team is to maintain a high health status of the PIC system and to protect our customers' herds. The Health Assurance team developed many biosecurity resources – [BioShield™ biosecurity manual](#), posters, [biosecurity training videos](#), signs and more.

For help with biosecurity or to learn more about the resources available, contact your PIC team.