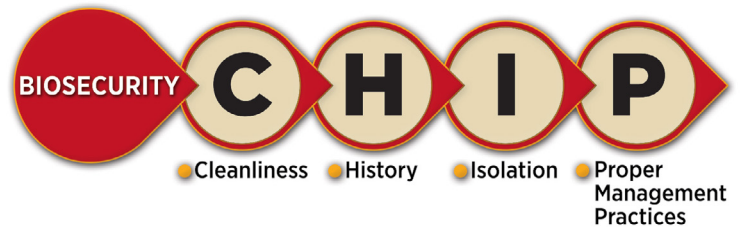


The Biosecurity CHIP

Biosecurity related to animal and human interactions is broken down into four basic principles. One way you can remember these principles is by thinking of the word “CHIP.”



“C” is for cleanliness.

Cleanliness starts with keeping both your animals and the equipment you use on and around them clean. Sharing grooming equipment is one of the most common ways that pathogens spread, because their surfaces can be easily contaminated with hair, dander and other debris. Avoid sharing equipment with others at shows or other animal events without properly cleaning it between animals (for example, by soaking it in a 6-percent bleach solution, then rinsing it thoroughly). If your animals will be sharing equipment such as trailers and feed and water buckets, make sure the items are safe, are clean and have been recently disinfected before using them.

Human health and personal hygiene are also part of the cleanliness step of biosecurity. Ringworm, *E. coli*, salmonella and other pathogens can pass from animals to humans and humans to animals. Wash your hands with soap and water after handling animals, and keep your clothing and shoes clean to help prevent the spread of pathogens.

“H” is for history.

Ask questions about any animals you’re considering buying before you purchase them. The first step in disease prevention is to be as familiar as possible with the general animal health and management practices of the operation you’re buying from. Knowing the diseases that animals have been vaccinated against is another way to prevent a variety of pathogens and be more prepared for future health concerns. Again, don’t be afraid to ask questions! They’ll save you time and money in the long run.

Check with all visitors to your farm to see if they have traveled to an area that may be infected with a pathogen that could spread to you or your animals (for example, foot and mouth disease is still a problem in the United Kingdom).

“I” is for isolation.

When new animals arrive on your farm, keep them separate from other animals for at least 14 days, and if possible, 30 days. This helps reduce the number of animals that would get sick if a newcomer brought a contagious disease into your facility. When returning from a show or other off-farm event, initially keep the returning animals separate to avoid passing along any infections they may have been exposed to.

Keep your clothes and shoes or boots separate, too. Don’t wear the same boots you wear in your barn to a show or fair, if possible. Diseases like the deadly Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea virus (PEDv) are spread via fecal matter, and shoes and boots are the most common carriers of manure, and therefore, the pathogen. Consider drawing a line that no barn shoes are allowed to cross to help avoid such contamination.

“P” is for proper management practices.

Proper animal management practices include observing your animals for signs of sickness, conducting appropriate vaccination programs and providing proper animal nutrition.

Controlling visitors’ access to areas where your animals are housed and often travel is another important management practice. Be sure that your own and all visitors’ shoes and boots are clean before and after visiting any farm. If you’re not sure visitors’ shoes and boots are clean, requiring everyone to wear disposable plastic boots that you provide is a good biosecurity safeguard. Some pathogens can also travel on clothes and on humans, so take extra precautions if there is an animal disease outbreak in your area or anywhere you or your animals are traveling.