

## On-farm biosecurity strategy for a notifiable disease outbreak: the 4S's

### SUMMARY

**The following strategy has been developed to help farmers plan what action they would take on their farm with respect to biosecurity in order to deal with an outbreak of a contagious, notifiable disease, such as foot and mouth, occurring in the UK.**

**The basis of the strategy is as follows:**

- **Act quickly and then lower the level of biosecurity measures rather than wait and possibly implement measures when it is too late.**
- **Individual farmers must decide when to implement the measures however this will also depend on the current legal requirements regarding the outbreak.**

### Introduction

At SAC Crichton Royal Farm a system is in operation to implement measures if a relevant disease outbreak is confirmed in the UK, following veterinary advice. The basis of the strategy is to act quickly and then lower the level of measures rather than to wait and possibly implement measures when it is too late.

The SEERAD website <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/> provides information including biosecurity guidance and official contingency plans. In the event of an outbreak SEERAD will announce specific legal requirements in proportion to the veterinary risk assessment at the time, a farmers own strategy must therefore be flexible to deal with these requirements. The types of measures farmers will want to consider will vary for different farms depending on layout, stock and staffing. However, the following basic principles can be applied to all farms.

The strategy is based on the 4Ss:

- STOCK
- SECURITY
- STAFF
- SUPPLIES

### STOCK

If a movement ban has been imposed, then stock cannot be moved on or off the farm. It may, however, be possible to move stock within the farm. This would ensure that the stock are away from fields adjoining neighbouring farms and close to the steading.

It may not be possible to move stock if they are far from the steading, or are on other holdings. In these circumstances arrangements should, if possible, be made for them to be inspected and, if necessary, fed by someone who is not looking after other stock. If stock are in exposed fields then some shelter must be provided to ensure satisfactory animal welfare standards are met.

It is possible that SEERAD may require the housing of some stock for biosecurity reasons, depending on the type of outbreak; plans should be in place for how this could be achieved.

If necessary farmers should contact their local SEERAD Animal Health Office for clarification on what stock movements are allowed and on any housing requirements.

## SECURITY

Walkers do not present a high biosecurity risk; however they should be encouraged to keep away from areas with livestock by the use of appropriate official signs. Unauthorised people should not be allowed to enter the farm steading. Ideally all entrances should have closed gates with 'no entry' signs and a contact telephone number clearly displayed. It is worthwhile having permanent gates at the farm entrance which can be closed/locked if necessary to prevent vehicle access.

There will still be a need for some vehicles and people to enter the farm and a cleansing and disinfection point should be established at the farm entrance(s).

## STAFF

People who have contact with other farms should, if possible, be stopped from coming onto your farm. This includes casual labour, land contractors who may also be working on other farms and full time staff who live on other farms. The rules that apply to staff must also apply to other visitors.

## EVALUATION OF 4S STRATEGY AT SAC CRICHTON ROYAL FARM

	Details	Proposed action
STOCK	Dry cows grazing boundary fields	Move nearer steading
	Dairy youngstock grazing away from farm	Need supplementary feed since unlikely to be able to move them. (Since discussed with veterinary surgeon and need to identify feed storage area and person to feed)
	Overwintering sheep on boundary fields	Leave in boundary field to be checked by competent person, who is not to come onto rest of farm

SECURITY	3 sets of farm buildings – gates recently fitted at all 3 entrances	Gates closed with no entry signs attached with contact telephone number
	Main steading is next to University Campus	All other gates also closed
	Cleansing and disinfection points have remained in position since 2001	Ensure sufficient disinfectant available

STAFF	Visitors	All cancelled
	Relief milkers	Asked not to come for 3 days, to give time to review
	Farm staff living on farm	Asked not to visit other farms
	Wives/Partners living on farm	Asked to leave cars in car park on edge of farm and dip feet
	Research staff	Only essential staff allowed on and these people to have no contact with other farms
	Contractors – dung spreading	Cancelled
	Contractors – maize harvesting planned for following week	Continue with contractor following 'Agricultural Contractors Code'. Maize needed for feeding. Decision to be reviewed after 3 days.

SUPPLIES	Feed	Adequate feed for next 3 weeks
	Straw	Delivery due – lorry to disinfect
	Sawdust	Delivery needed – lorry to disinfect
	Disinfectant	Plenty in stock
	Milk tanker	Ensure disinfectant
	Post	Leave at farm gate

## SUPPLIES

Check the level of supplies and arrange for any essential supplies to be delivered in larger loads, to minimise the number of vehicles entering the farm. If possible arrange for smaller consignments to be collected from the farm gate.

## TESTING THE STRATEGY

It is worthwhile testing the strategy for your individual farm circumstances. This may identify areas about which you are unsure. Discuss these issues with your veterinary surgeon now, rather than resolving the problem when a disease outbreak occurs.

A test undertaken at SAC Crichton Royal Farm is summarised below. Crichton Royal Farm, is a research unit and will have different circumstances from other farms. For this purpose all farms are unique and therefore an individual strategy is needed. The main weakness identified at Crichton Royal was the youngstock grazing away from the main steading.

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