

# Everyday Biosecurity Recommendations for Dairy and Beef Cattle Farm Personnel

Having a biosecurity plan with clear plans and protocols is crucial to protect your animals and farm personnel, while also preventing the spread of disease to others or through outside visitors. With the recent outbreaks of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in dairy cows, livestock producers should heighten their biosecurity practices on the farm. According to the latest announcements by American Veterinary Medical Association and American Association of Bovine Practitioners (AABP), the disease syndrome in cattle does not cause high morbidity and mortality as it does in birds. The AABP announced April 7, 2024 that it will call this emerging disease **Bovine Influenza A Virus (BIAV)** to better distinguish the disease syndrome in cattle from the pathogenesis observed in birds; however, the USDA requests that the disease continue to be referred to as HPAI.

## *What are the essentials for farm personnel biosecurity?*

The following recommendations are very important to protect farm workers on a day-to-day basis and when handling sick or dead animals.

1. Best personal hygiene practices:
  - a. Thoroughly and frequently wash your hands with soap and hot water.
  - b. Avoid touching your eye/face/mouth and food with dirty hands to prevent the spread of the virus.
  - c. Have a dedicated and clean eating area and food storage (e.g., refrigerator).
2. Do not eat around animals and/or while working in the barn.
3. Do not use bare hands to pick up a dead bird or animal. Wear disposable waterproof gloves to pick up the dead birds, place them inside a disposable plastic bag, seal the bag, and dispose in the trash where it cannot be accessed by children or animals.
4. Wear disposable gloves. Throw away used disposable gloves after each use.
5. Wear protective safety glasses or face shield. Sanitize and disinfect them daily.
6. Wear clean clothing and footwear dedicated for the farm:
  - a. All footwear used on the farm must be cleaned and disinfected before and after use.
  - b. Leave the work clothing and boots at the farm and change into clean clothing and footwear before returning home.
  - c. Clothing should be sanitized frequently by washing it with soap and hot water.
7. Avoid drinking unpasteurized “raw milk”.
8. Monitor and limit entry to the farm by outside visitors and workers:
  - a. Implement and maintain a visitor logbook for all outside visitors (e.g., name, contact information).



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7. Monitor personnel for potential signs of respiratory symptoms or influenza-like illness:
  - a. Fever (body temperature of 100°Fahrenheit, 37.5° Celsius, or greater)
  - b. Eye redness, tearing, or irritation
  - c. Runny or stuffy nose
  - d. Cough
  - e. Sore throat
  - f. Difficult breathing or shortness of breath
  - g. Muscle or body aches
  - h. Diarrhea
  - i. Personnel with suspected signs should contact their health care provider immediately.
8. Newly purchased animals should undergo testing prior to arrival at the farm, followed by a quarantine to promptly identify and prevent potential disease transmission. Do not move/transport sick or exposed animals.
9. Before purchasing animals or selling animals to buyers in other states, check on the current policies on transport of animals within or across state lines ([InterstateLivestock.com](http://InterstateLivestock.com)).

### What are the clinical signs in cattle?

1. Affected animals are showing low morbidity, affecting about 10% of cows.
2. Reduced feed and water intake, leading to reduced milk yield. An abnormal number of cows milking cows could be flagged on the list of cows to be screened when using milk yield/conductivity meters and activity monitoring systems.
3. Decreased rumen motility with abnormal manure (tacky or loose).
4. Affected cows are depressed with reduced activity.
5. Abnormal milk appearance characterized by thicker colostrum-like consistency with

yellowish in color leading to changes in milk conductivity.

### What should I do when sick cows are suspected?

1. Notify your herd veterinarian immediately so they can determine if sampling and testing are required.
2. Implement an isolation plan to reduce direct points of contact between healthy and affected animals. Milk sick animals last, and clean and sanitize the milking machine/parlor afterwards. Implement a milking protocol similar to the protocols used for contagious mastitis.
3. Reduce farm personnel exposure to animals suspected or confirmed with HPAI (including dead animals). Please follow the biosecurity protocol listed above.
4. Pasteurize colostrum and milk prior to feeding it to calves.

For more information about farm biosecurity plans, practices, and resources, please visit:

1. [Secure Milk Supply](#) and [Biosecurity Resources for Producers](#)
2. [Beef Quality Assurance](#)
3. [FARM Biosecurity](#)
4. [Center for Food Security and Public Health](#)
5. [Cleaning and Disinfection Tips](#)
6. [Characteristics of Select Disinfectant Classes](#)
7. [Information for Producers and Veterinarians](#)

For the latest update on HPAI cases detected in dairy cattle by State, please visit:

1. [USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services](#). Confirmed cases across the US are updated weekdays by 4:00 pm ET.
2. [Ohio Department of Agriculture](#)



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According to the [Food and Drug Administration](#) and [Centers for Disease and Prevention](#), the milk supply and dairy products are safe due to both Federal animal health requirements and pasteurization. Therefore, the public health risk associated with HPAI remains low.

**An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!** Livestock producers are strongly encouraged to work closely with their herd veterinarian to prevent the spread of HPAI amongst individuals and across farms. OSU Extension is available to assist with biosecurity plans and practices that are specific for your operations.

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