

FEED AND WATER BIOSECURITY TIP SHEET



Fresh feed and water are essential for animal health. Clean, fresh water and feed are necessary to maintain animal health and to produce quality meat, milk, eggs, and fiber.

FEED

- Buy feed only from reputable sources that have a quality control program.
- Keep records of the date of purchased or delivered feed. If possible, save the label or tag with the lot number in the event of a recall.
- Examine feed shipments for rodent droppings, insects, mold, unusual odors, foreign material, or other contaminants. Do not feed if found.
- Wash your hands before and after handling feed.

FEED STORAGE

- Prevent exposure of feed to weather and pests. Keep grain-based feed in bulk bins or in containers with tight fitting lids (metal is ideal).
- If more than one species is kept on the farm, clearly label feed bins to keep them separate.
- Protect feed and forages from rain and snow to prevent mold and spoilage.
- Clean up feed spills or waste immediately to prevent pests.

EQUIPMENT

- Have dedicated feeding equipment for storing, handling, and preparing to prevent contamination.
- If the same feeding equipment is used for bedding and manure handling, be sure to thoroughly clean and disinfect it before using for feeding.

FEEDING PRACTICES

- Avoid feeding directly on the ground. Use feeders, troughs, or bunks. Do not place new feed on top of old feed to decrease the risk of spoilage and bacterial growth.
- For grazing animals, walk or drive through fields and pastures. Look for foreign debris, toxic plants, wild animal activity, or other potential hazards.
- Prevent overgrazing to decrease the risk of livestock exposure to feces, insects, or toxic plants.
- If antibiotics are used in feed or water sources, ensure that they are used under the supervision of a veterinarian and withdrawal periods are followed.
- If insect or algae killing products are used in or around feeders or waterers, follow label directions carefully to avoid exposure to livestock.



Feed is kept in bags off the floor and in bins with tight lids.

Source: Danelle Bickett-Weddle, Iowa State University



A goat eating hay out of a feeder instead of off the ground.

Source: Renée Dewell, Iowa State University

FORAGES AND GRAZING

- Check labels of herbicides used on the farm for livestock grazing restrictions.
- Make sure that fodder crops, such as hay or alfalfa have been dried and stored properly and do not contain mold or pests.
- Spread out hay flakes or round bales to avoid crowding of animals while eating. Rotate feed placement to prevent build-up of feces near animal feeding areas.

WATER

Good quality water should be available to all animals at all times.

- Test water once a year for substances that might be harmful to animals.
- Monitor ponds for blue-green algae blooms which can be toxic to livestock, poultry and dogs.
- Have a back-up plan for natural water sources in case they become unsafe to drink.
- If possible, fence off areas where wastewater or other contaminated water could be accessed by animals. Prevent animals from contaminating fresh water sources.
- Change or flush water sources at least weekly to decrease insect eggs and larvae.
- If automatic waterers are used, they should be checked and regularly flushed to maintain proper function.



Piglets drinking from a properly functioning automatic waterer.
Pork Checkoff/Flickr (<https://flic.kr/p/FGmMBJ>)
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CLEANING AND SANITATION

Feeders and waterers should be cleaned at least weekly or sooner if build up is found.

- Remove debris in and around feed and water containers.
- Prevent stagnant water from pooling around feeders and troughs.
- Place feed and water sources so that people or animals cannot step into them.
- Protect feed and water sources from contamination by urine and feces.
- Clean up organic material (leaves, plant debris, bedding material, hay, feed, manure) from feed and water containers on a regular basis.
- Prevent wildlife activity, including birds and nests, around feeders and waterers in animal areas.



Clean a waterer by scrubbing and disinfecting when needed.
Source: Danelle Bickett-Weddle,
Iowa State University

ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Use the following checklist to determine areas where you are doing well and others that need to improve.

YES	NO	After answering, pick one or two “No” answers and make an improvement plan with the resources below.
		Is fresh, clean water available to all animals throughout the day?
		Are feed spills cleaned up immediately?
		If the same equipment is used for feed and manure handling, is it thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before it is used for feeding?

MORE RESOURCES:

[Managing Pasture Water](#). Iowa State University.

[Nutrient Management on Livestock Farms: Tips for Feeding](#). Rutgers University.

[Poisonous Plants](#). Cornell University.

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