



Step 2: Self-Assessment Disease Prevention Checklist - organic and alternative livestock and poultry

This checklist points out disease prevention strengths (what you are doing well) and areas for improvement on your organic/alternative livestock farm/ranch. Disease prevention actions can reduce the risk of disease-causing germs from entering, spreading, and leaving your property. This helps keep animals healthy. Disease prevention actions can also protect people from zoonotic diseases that can spread between animals and humans.

If you participate in an organic or alternative program that requires a similar disease prevention checklist, please scan through these checklist items to see if there are any items that you might want to add to your current program.

PLANNING, MANAGING, AND TRAINING FOR DISEASE PREVENTION

Disease prevention plans do not have to be complicated to work. A plan should address all the ways disease could enter or spread on your farm and describe actions to prevent it. Use these 3 steps to get started. Step 1: Fill out the Movement Risks document. Step 2: Fill out this checklist. Step 3: Use the disease prevention plan template to write a plan. Once written, train others involved with your farm about what is needed.

Look through the questions below. Answer those that apply to your operation and ignore or cross off the others.

PROTECTING YOUR HERD/FLOCK

Disease can enter from outside sources. Disease prevention actions can protect your animals. Limiting entry to your farm can protect your herd/flock.

YES	NO	
		Can you limit entry of people and vehicles to your farm/ranch?
		Are signs posted at the entry points with information on how to enter?
		Do you have a parking area for vehicles away from animal areas?

VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

Animal diseases can be spread by dirty or shared vehicles, ATV's, machinery, and equipment. Use the Step 1 Movement Risks document for a list of things that come on or leave your farm.

YES	NO	
		Can you limit entry of shared vehicles, machinery, and equipment if they are dirty?
		If equipment is shared with other animal operations, is it cleaned and disinfected before entering your property?

ANIMAL HEALTH AND DISEASE MONITORING

Good husbandry combined with good disease prevention actions helps animals thrive.

YES	NO	
		Do your animals have a clean, dry place to rest?
		Do those working with animals on your farm/ranch follow good animal handling practices?
		Do animal caretakers check animals often for signs of disease?
		Do you have a separate area to isolate sick animals in a different building, area or with at least a 6-foot buffer area?
		Do animal caretakers work with the healthiest and youngest animals first, then older animals, then sick animals last?
		Do you feed your animals based on their age, growth, and health needs?
		Do you have a vaccination program for all species on your operation?
		Do you check your medicine refrigerator to ensure it is at the proper temperature (36° - 46°F)?
		Do you have a parasite prevention program for all of your livestock/poultry species?

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION (C&D)

Cleaning and disinfection – also referred to as C&D – is key to disease prevention. C&D reduces or kills germs that can spread disease to your animals.

YES	NO	
		Do you thoroughly clean (remove any visible manure, dirt, bedding) and wash all objects before applying a disinfectant?
		Are disinfectants used according to the product label (storing, mixing, concentration, protective gear, rinsing, etc.)?
		Do you always allow a disinfection solution contact time to “sit” and work?
		Are safety measures (e.g., avoiding runoff, wearing safety equipment) taken during C&D?

PERSONNEL (FAMILY MEMBERS, EMPLOYEES, VISITORS)

People who handle animals should be only those with clean clothing, clean footwear, and clean hands. This can also protect people from zoonotic diseases that can be spread between animals and people.

YES	NO	
		Do you limit who has contact with your animals?
		Do you restrict people who have traveled internationally from entering your operation?
		Do you provide gloves or a handwashing station with running water, soap, and towels for animal handlers?
		Do you provide shoe covers or changing of shoes for people entering animal areas?

ZOONOTIC DISEASES AND AGRITOURISM

If you host a farm store or have people visit your farm for animal related events, they could be at risk for diseases that are spread between animals and humans. Simple practices can help keep visitors safe.

YES	NO	
		Do you have barriers in place to limit contact between animals and visitors?
		Do you provide gloves or a handwashing station with running water, soap, and towels for visitors?
		Do you have signs posted that promote handwashing before and after animal contact?
		Is human food not allowed in animal areas?

ANIMAL MOVEMENT

Animals moving on and off your property can introduce and spread disease.

YES	NO	
		Do you buy animals only from places with strict disease prevention programs?
		Are new or returning animals (animals who have been off farm visiting fairs, exhibitions or agritourism events) separated from all other animals for a period of time before mixing them with your herd/flock?
		Is separate feed and water equipment used for new or returning animals?
		Do you have an emergency plan to care for your animals in the event of a natural disaster or other event that could stop animal or supply movement?

CARCASS DISPOSAL

Farms lose animals due to disease, accidents, and old age. Carcasses should be disposed of promptly to prevent exposure to other animals and to protect human health. Carcass disposal includes burial, burning, composting, landfill, or rendering. Local and state rules on carcass disposal must be followed.

YES	NO	
		Do you know the approved options to dispose of carcasses in your area?
		Are rendering trucks or other vehicles that haul dead animals to a common disposal site restricted from entering your property?
		Are dead animals disposed of in a way that prevents the attraction and access of wildlife, pets, rodents, and other scavengers?

MANURE, LITTER, AND BEDDING MANAGEMENT

Manure, litter, and bedding can be good for the soil but can also contain disease-causing germs. Safe handling can help prevent animal and human diseases. Local and state rules on manure disposal must be followed.

YES	NO	
		Is animal housing managed to prevent manure, litter or soiled bedding buildup?
		Do you prevent young animals from coming in contact with manure and soiled bedding from older animals?
		Do you purchase/use bedding materials from trustworthy sources with a quality control program?

WILDLIFE, RODENT, AND OTHER ANIMAL CONTROL

Wildlife, rodents, birds, and other animals like cats and dogs can carry disease on their fur, feet, feathers, or in their feces. Keeping these animals away from animal areas takes effort.

YES	NO	
		Do you have an on-farm person or professional company in place and monitor rodent/pest bait?
		Is trash removed often?
		Are steps taken to minimize bird and rodent nesting around your farm or ranch?
		Are roaming dogs and cats prevented from entering animal areas?

FEED AND WATER

Feed and water are essential for animal health.

YES	NO	
		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?

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