

Significance of Biosecurity Audits in Addressing HPAI Challenges

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What is a Biosecurity Audit?

Biosecurity refers to the set of measures and protocols aimed at preventing the introduction and spread of diseases such as HPAI (High Pathogenic Avian Influenza) among poultry by using procedures like isolation, sanitation, and documentation. A biosecurity audit is a structured and methodical assessment of a poultry farm's biosecurity measures, designed to identify gaps, vulnerabilities, and potential areas of improvement in the farm's biosecurity plan.

Why is Biosecurity Audit important for poultry producers?

By implementing effective biosecurity measures, farms can help minimize the risk of HPAI outbreaks, which can have serious financial and operational impacts on the farm. To be eligible for indemnity in the event of a Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreak, commercial producers must be enrolled in the [National Poultry Improvement Plan \(NPIP\)](#) and have their biosecurity audit carried out by the designated state agent. According to 9 CFR § 53.10 commercial poultry producer is defined as having a minimum annual production of:



- 100,000 broilers
- 30,000 turkeys
- 75,000 table eggs
- 25,000 gamebirds



Who performs the Biosecurity Audit?

[Maryland Department of Agriculture \(MDA\)](#), the Official State Agent (OSA) of the NPIP, conducts the biennial (two-yearly) biosecurity audits. Field veterinarians from the MDA review the biosecurity plans periodically at the company level and check if the plans are implemented by individual producers or not. Any producer fulfilling the above criteria but not associated with any companies may contact MDA Animal Health at **410-841-5810**. For small-scale poultry producers and backyard growers who may not be required to undergo an audit from the OSA, it is advisable to have your biosecurity plan reviewed by your **flock veterinarian** or an **industry representative** every six months.

How to create an effective Biosecurity Plan for NPIP audit?

There are no specific rules to create biosecurity plans and they can be individualized to address site-specific and product specific requirements.

- It should follow a general [14-point guideline](#) set by the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) as described in (Figure 1). The audit should have information about site specific procedures; premise map with line of separation and perimeter buffer area; traffic flow, etc.

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- The biosecurity practice should be well documented. Documents like movement logs of poultry, vehicles, and personnel; training certificates and records; pest control logs; SOP for biosecurity protocols like cleaning and disinfection, etc., should be well maintained.
- A template for a site biosecurity plan can be found [here](#).
- Paperwork-only audits, without any site inspection, can be conducted by producers to be familiar with the Audit process and Biosecurity practices in the farm.

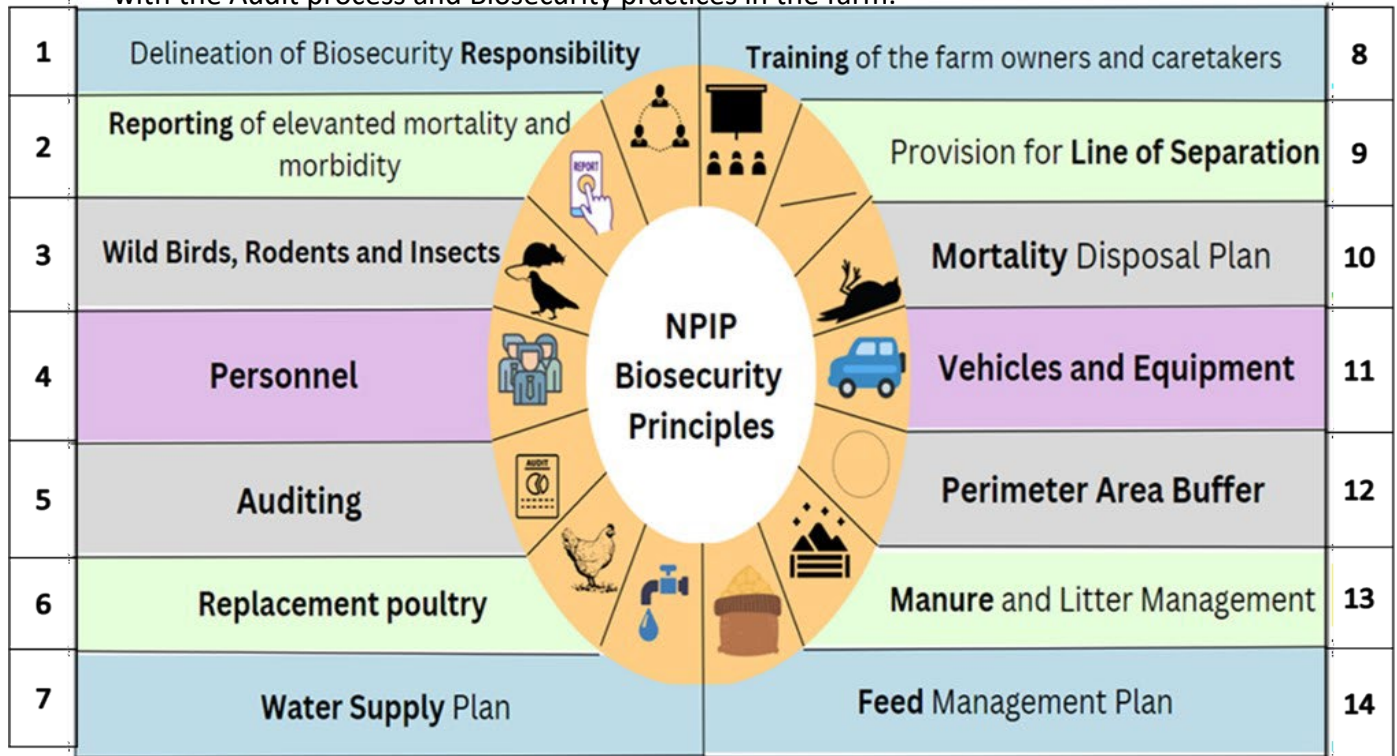


Figure 1: 14 Elements of the Biosecurity Principles as Suggested by NPIP

Important Links and Resources:

1. Biosecurity plan template: <https://bit.ly/3IDuDHY>
2. NPIP Biosecurity Principles: <https://bit.ly/3yWXotA>
3. NPIP Biosecurity Template Audit Form: <https://bit.ly/3ou3sYX>
4. USDA Biosecurity Checklist for HPAI: <https://bit.ly/3FF7N14>
5. Biosecurity Audits: What to expect and how to prepare: <https://bit.ly/3yYGfQg>

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