

TOP 10 FARM-GATE HYGIENE ACTIVITIES

Best practice farm-gate hygiene can stop the spread of pests and diseases, including phylloxera. Vinehealth Australia has compiled the top 10 farm-gate hygiene activities in this handy fact sheet, to assist you in your biosecurity practices.

Farm-gate hygiene activities are site-specific biosecurity practices to minimise the risk of pest, disease and weed incursions on your property. These farm-gate hygiene activities should be part of your standard operating procedures.

Adherence to farm-gate hygiene systems should be an expectation for staff, contractors and visitors throughout your vineyard, winery and cellar door.

Your commitment to biosecurity at the farm-gate is a vital part of Australia's biosecurity system. Biosecurity is a shared responsibility – we all need to work collaboratively.

If you can tick off these 10 key activities, you are doing your bit to keep your vines safe and you are contributing to the security of the Australian wine industry.

WHAT IS BIOSECURITY?

Biosecurity is a system to reduce the risk of entry, establishment and spread of pests, diseases and weeds that threaten the economy, communities and environment. It's also a system for managing and recovering from an incursion of a pest and disease by minimising its impact through eradication, containment and ongoing asset protection.

WHO IS VINEHEALTH AUSTRALIA?

Vinehealth Australia is a statutory authority committed to minimising the risk of pests and diseases (in particular phylloxera) in vineyards, by investing in biosecurity training and awareness, policy and procedures, research and development priority setting, and preparedness, prevention and response activities, to the benefit of South Australia's and Australia's grape and wine industries.

TOP 10 FARM-GATE HYGIENE ACTIONS



1. I regularly review my links with interstate vineyards, wineries, contractors and suppliers. I always abide by my state's quarantine regulations for the movement of grapes, must, unfiltered juice, grape marc, vineyard machinery, vineyard equipment, diagnostic samples, vineyard soil and grapevine propagation material between Phylloxera Management Zones and states to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of grape phylloxera.



2. I provide training on hygiene protocols to all staff, including contract and casual labour. My staff understand why adherence to these protocols will help to keep my vines healthy. I include farm-gate hygiene requirements in my staff induction processes. I train vineyard staff in effective vineyard monitoring, what to look for and the importance of reporting anything unusual. My staff are familiar with the locations of Phylloxera Infested Zones and Phylloxera Risk Zones in Australia.



3. I understand that visitors can track unwanted pests, diseases and weeds into and through my vineyard. I restrict access to my property with fences and gates. I limit the number of entry points to my property. I ensure unused gates are locked. I ensure vines near high traffic areas, such as public roads, bike tracks and walking trails are fenced. I train staff to ensure they shut and lock (where appropriate) gates behind them.



4. I use signs to advise restrictions of entry to my property. I use farm-gate signs for operational entrances, asking visitors to report on entry to the vineyard office and I include a contact number for the site manager. I use consumer-friendly signs for tourist entrances such as cellar door, restaurant and accommodation areas. I clearly convey visitor expectations on my signs, such as 'Please don't walk amongst my vines'.



5. I require all visitors to report to my vineyard office on arrival at my property, so I can assess what risk they pose in introducing pests, diseases and weeds to my vineyard. I ensure access to vines only under controlled conditions. I keep a visitor log, recording vineyard regions each visitor has visited in the past three weeks and check whether there has been a visit to a vineyard in a Phylloxera Infested Zone or a Phylloxera Risk Zone in Victoria, New South Wales or Queensland.



6. I do not allow unauthorised vehicles to drive within my vineyard as they can pick up and spread pests, diseases and weeds. I provide parking for visitor vehicles away from vines on a hard pack surface. If visitors must enter the vineyard, I provide a vineyard vehicle for use. If the visitor vehicle must enter the vineyard for operational purposes, I determine which vineyard regions the vehicle has visited in the past three weeks and allow entry only under controlled conditions.

TOP 10 FARM-GATE HYGIENE ACTIONS



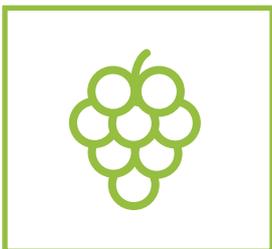
7. I regularly inspect my vines for anything unusual. I know the high priority exotic pests and diseases and regulated endemic pests (including grape phylloxera) for the grape and wine industries. I know what times of the season I may see these different pests or diseases and I time my monitoring activities accordingly. I take pictures of what I see so that I can verify my findings. I know where to seek help to identify what the problem is, and I do so willingly because I understand the potential impact of an outbreak of a high priority plant pest. I report anything unusual to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881 or to Vinehealth Australia.



8. I ensure machinery and equipment is clean of all soil and plant material upon entry and exit of my vineyard. I ensure that it complies with state quarantine regulations before entering my vineyard and is accompanied by the required documentation that specifies mandatory sterilisation where it applies. I provide a wash down facility to enable cleaning of machinery and equipment before it leaves my property.



9. I acknowledge the risk that footwear and clothing can pose in picking up and spreading pests, diseases and weeds. I evaluate the risk of footwear and clothing and only allow vine access under controlled conditions depending on where the footwear and clothing has been worn in the previous three weeks. If entry is granted to my vines, I ensure all people who come onto my property either disinfest their footwear upon entry and exit in accordance with the current Footwear and Small Hand Tool Disinfestation Protocol, or, I provide 'safe shoes' such as property rubber boots or work boots. I follow guidelines in Vinehealth Australia's 'Biosecurity Planning for Vineyard Owners Hosting Visitors' fact sheet for managing clothing.



10. I acknowledge that planting with pest free propagation material is likely to prolong the health of my vineyard and provide me the greatest chance of producing the yield and quality desired. When I buy planting material, I verify its health status by asking for a documented history of virus test results from source blocks or mother vines. I do not accept propagation material of unknown origin. I also ask for proof of the nursery's accreditation. I always conduct virus testing of both scion and rootstock before I consider top working or grafting. If I experience vine health issues with my newly planted or grafted vines, I immediately notify my nursery and conduct testing to identify the problem.

Vinehealth Australia operates a heat shed facility in Naracoorte (SA) for disinfesting machinery and equipment. To use this heat shed, contact Sunbird Viticulture on 0429 430 641.

Need help with biosecurity management or further detail around these 10 activities? Talk to Vinehealth Australia on (08) 8273 0550, email admin@vinehealth.com.au or visit www.vinehealth.com.au