



## WORKING WITH CONTRACTORS: EARTHWORKS

From land-clearing to road maintenance to vineyard establishment, contractors performing earthworks activities are common visitors to vineyard properties.

If you're planning to use an earthworks contractor, what questions should you ask before the job starts? And what checks should you perform when they arrive?

On pages two and three are a list of themed questions and answers that will help to focus your conversation with contractors and protect your property from pests, diseases and weeds.

To assess and address the risks associated with anyone wishing to enter your property, we suggest you use this fact sheet in conjunction with our 'Biosecurity Planning for Vineyard Owners Hosting Visitors fact sheet', available on our website [www.vinehealth.com.au](http://www.vinehealth.com.au)

**BEST PRACTICE MEANS ASSESSING THE BIOSECURITY RISK BEFORE THE ACTIVITY OCCURS AND MANAGING ALL RISKS TO REDUCE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR PESTS, DISEASES AND WEEDS TO ENTER YOUR PROPERTY.**

**Vinehealth Australia is the wine biosecurity expert, providing information and tools for best practice operational biosecurity, and supporting vital biosecurity programs and research.**

## What activity are contractors proposing to perform on your property?

This will guide you as to what area(s) on your property could be at risk from a biosecurity (and other) perspective depending on where the earth-moving contractors need to work and what this work entails (e.g. vineyard, animals, water sources, soil, amenity). You want to limit exposure to sensitive areas.

### Direct questions during planning:

- What parts of my property will you need to access?

### Direct questions/checks on the day:

- Once the contractor has arrived at your property and assessed access points, again clarify: what parts of my property will you need to access to do your job?

## Are contractors bringing any machinery or equipment with them to perform the task?

Machinery/equipment/vehicles/tyres can pick up and spread soil and plant material, which can harbor insects and weed seeds. Phylloxera for example, can survive for up to 29 days without food and so obtaining accurate past history of the machinery/equipment/vehicle is vital.

Machinery and equipment are regulated items with respect to a range of soil and plant-borne pests (including but not limited to: Grape phylloxera, Red Imported Fire Ant, Potato Cyst Nematode, Cucumber Green Mottle Mosaic Virus, Green Snail, Tomato Potato Psyllid and Zebra Chip, Potato Spindle Tuber Viroid and *Fusarium oxysporum* Race 3). Strict movement requirements apply and are set by state Plant Quarantine Standards or equivalent (<https://vinehealth.com.au/regulation/movement-regulations/>). One of these requirements is that the item is cleaned free of all soil and plant material before it is moved. Another is a potential requirement for sterilisation. In most situations, machinery or equipment entering a state would need to be accompanied by biosecurity documentation.

It is the contractor's responsibility to ensure all movements are undertaken according to state Plant Quarantine Standards or equivalent, but also your responsibility as a grower to know the movement requirements and to protect your own property by asking the right questions of your contractor. For further information, refer Vinehealth Australia's Biosecurity Planning for Vineyard Owners Hosting Visitors factsheet (<https://vinehealth.com.au/category/fact-sheets/>).

### Direct questions during planning:

- What machinery or equipment will you be bringing?
- How will it be transported?

- What cleaning and/or sterilisation will be undertaken before it reaches my property?
- Communicate that all machinery/equipment and transport vehicles are to be cleaned free of soil and plant material on arrival.
- If sterilisation is required, communicate that you want a copy of all biosecurity documentation on arrival.
- Refer to Flowchart C in the Biosecurity Planning for Vineyard Owners Hosting Visitors factsheet.

### Direct questions/checks on the day:

- Inspect for cleanliness from soil and plant material.
- Ask where the machinery/equipment was used for at least the 29 days prior and record this.
- Ask to see and keep a copy of any biosecurity documentation. Do not allow illegal movements onto your property.

## Who will be coming?

Footwear and clothing can also pick up and spread pests, diseases and weeds. As footwear and clothing are not regulated, it is the grower's responsibility to set the requirements for entry and undertake disinfection for footwear and small hand tools before a person is allowed to enter a sensitive part of a property such as a vineyard. For further information, refer Vinehealth Australia's Biosecurity Planning for Vineyard Owners Hosting Visitors factsheet (<https://vinehealth.com.au/category/fact-sheets/>).

From a phylloxera perspective for clothing, we recommend requiring hot washing on the highest temperature setting, followed by tumble-drying also on high heat. As an alternative, you can consider providing single-use coveralls, or alternative clothing which stays onsite to be worn.

For footwear, insist on footwear disinfection according to the Footwear and Small Hand Tools Disinfection Protocol (<https://vinehealth.com.au/category/posters/>) using a 60 second immersion in a 2% strength sodium hypochlorite solution, or you may consider providing footwear which stays on site to be worn.

### Direct questions during planning:

- Who will be coming onto my property?
- Have they worked in any wine regions for at least the 29 days prior and if so, which ones?
- What footwear and clothing cleaning and/or sterilisation do I require to be undertaken before they reach my property.
- Communicate that all footwear and clothing must be cleaned free of soil and plant material on arrival.
- Consider if you will provide onsite footwear and clothing and/or communicate that footwear will need



to be sterilised in chlorine under your instruction upon entry to your property before work can commence.

- Refer to Flowcharts A and B in the Biosecurity Planning for Vineyard Owners Hosting Visitors factsheet.

#### **Direct questions/checks on the day:**

- Have you visited vineyards in at least the 29 days prior AND touched vines or walked down or near vine rows?
- Were the vines that you touched or the vine rows that you walked down or near, located in a Phylloxera Infested Zone or Phylloxera Risk Zone or in an overseas wine region?
- Are you wearing the same shoes and clothing (including hats)?
- What footwear and clothing sterilisation have you undertaken before entering my property?

### **How will contractors move around your property?**

If possible, it's best practice to limit foreign vehicle movement around your property due to potential spread of pests, diseases and weeds. For further detail, refer to the Biosecurity Planning for Vineyard Owners Hosting Visitors factsheet (<https://vinehealth.com.au/category/fact-sheets/>).

Consider if you have an onsite vehicle that can be used by the contractor for movement within your property as appropriate.

#### **Direct questions during planning:**

- Communicate parking areas on your property (preferably on hard stand areas).

#### **Direct questions/checks on the day:**

- Has your vehicle, machinery been parked in the designated parking area.

### **Clean in, clean out**

As part of joint responsibility for biosecurity, it's important that any vehicles, machinery, equipment, footwear and clothing leaving your site are cleaned of soil and plant material prior to exiting your property, as you would have expected them to arrive clean prior to entry to your property.

#### **Direct questions during planning:**

- What do I need to provide onsite to ensure you can clean your vehicle, equipment, machinery, footwear from soil and plant material before you leave my property?

#### **Direct questions/checks on the day:**

- Reminder about cleaning prior to exiting your property and where to undertake this cleaning.

**For further information, refer to Vinehealth Australia's website [www.vinehealth.com.au](http://www.vinehealth.com.au) or phone (08) 8273 0550**