



ENHANCED BIOSECURITY TO PROTECT YOUR FARM

The Australian egg industry is dealing with a new strain of *Salmonella* Enteritidis (SE) that was first detected in September last year. 10 properties in NSW and Victoria have now tested positive to SE and our growing understanding of the transmission pathways indicates eradication will only be possible with the very highest standards of biosecurity compliance across the entire industry.

The devastating impact of SE contamination on farms and livelihoods has shown food safety and biosecurity gaps are no longer an option for any egg farming business, regardless of location, size or trading relationships.

Farmers are the only ones who can implement change on the ground and Australian Eggs strongly urges everyone to consider the following information, even if it challenges long-term thinking and practices.

► **FOR MORE INFORMATION** contact Australian Eggs on
(02) 9409 6999 | contacts@australianeggs.org.au

► **RELEVANT RESOURCES**

Salmonella Risk Assessment Toolkit

<https://www.australianeggs.org.au/for-farmers/salmonella-risk-assessment-toolkit/>

National Farm Biosecurity Technical Manual

<https://www.australianeggs.org.au/for-farmers/biosecurity/>

Salmonella Incidence Response Plan

<https://www.australianeggs.org.au/for-farmers/food-safety/>



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HOW HAS IT SPREAD?

SE is an unusual pathogen in that it can survive without a host species for long periods of time. Investigating authorities believe it has so far been spread through the most common farm movements of vehicles and equipment and bacterial loads have built-up in areas that haven't been subjected to biosecurity controls. Strict cleaning and regular hygiene regimes in sheds

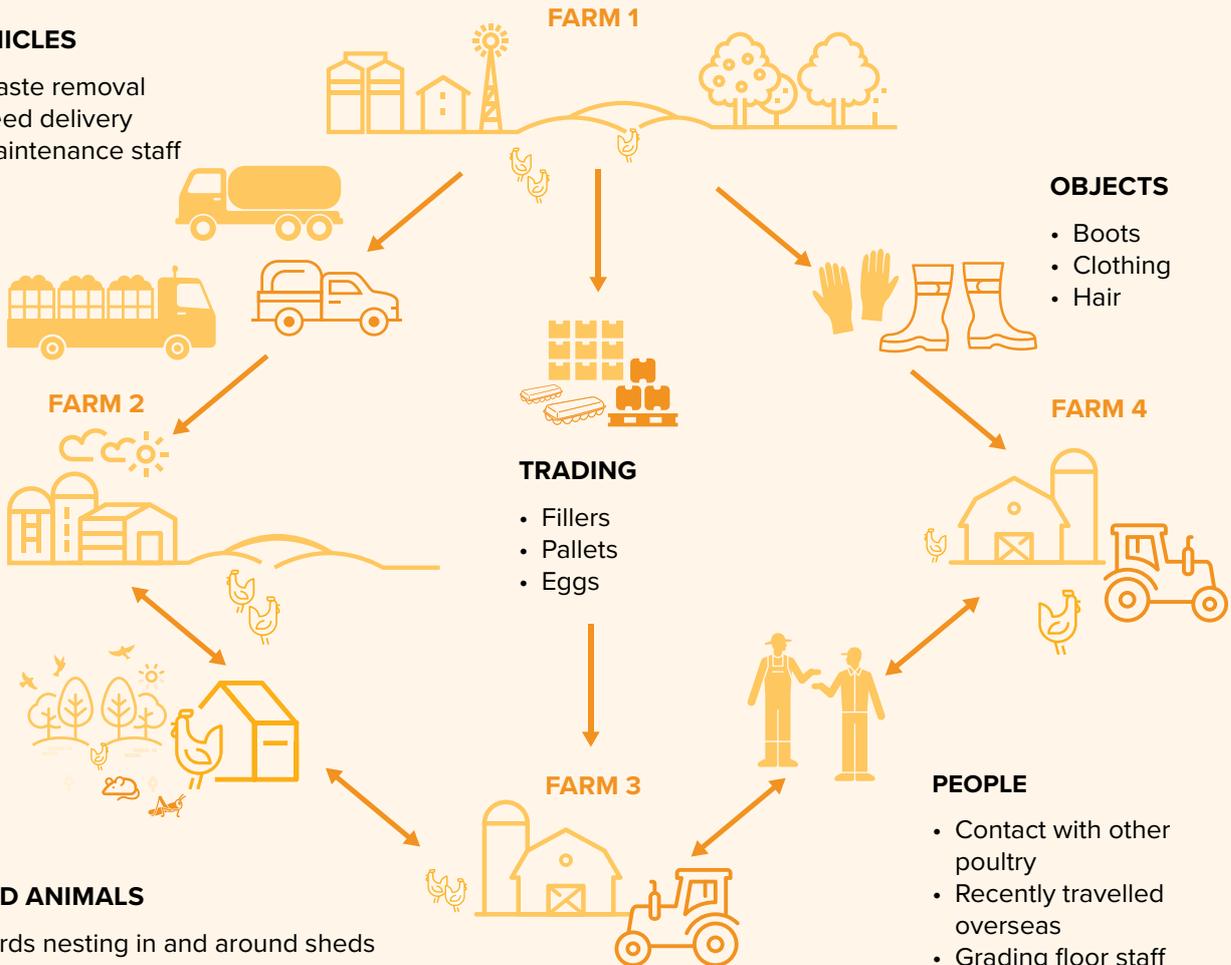
and egg storage areas are not necessarily enough as SE is able to survive in dust and organic matter in surrounding areas.

Unlike other diseases that start in livestock, SE has spread through egg trading, transporters and contractors. That is, there is a reverse flow happening from market to hens.

TRANSMISSION OPPORTUNITIES

VEHICLES

- Waste removal
- Feed delivery
- Maintenance staff



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WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

The good news is SE is able to be killed and constant vigilance should be effective in managing bacterial load. Daily cleaning and disinfection and strict biosecurity movement controls should be implemented to limit potential spread. Specifically, the requirements are:

- ▶ Daily cleaning and disinfection of all traffic areas on farm
- ▶ 3-zone (dirty → change → clean) stations at farm and shed entrances (see figure 1)
- ▶ Strict rules for staff traffic flow following low-risk to high-risk principles (see figure 2) chicks, pullets, younger single age, older single age, multi-age production
- ▶ Regular swab testing of empty, cleaned sheds prior to placement of birds
- ▶ Regular swab testing of egg grading facilities
- ▶ Meticulous hand washing, clothing and boot hygiene requirements for all staff
- ▶ Allowing only essential vehicles onto sites, installing vehicle sanitation stations and properly covering loads of manure/discarded eggs/spent hens
- ▶ Asking all visitors to stick to paths and designated roadways as much as possible when moving around the farm
- ▶ Asking chick, pullet, feed and other suppliers to show *Salmonella* testing records or a letter explaining how risks are managed
- ▶ Conducting visitor risk assessments on contractors, consultants, maintenance staff, itinerant workers etc. who move between farms and regions
- ▶ Minimising visitors to farms
- ▶ Having a thorough pest control program in place to control vermin and insects in both sheds and surrounding areas.

FIGURE 1 3-ZONE STATIONS



FIGURE 2 STAFF MOVEMENT ON FARM



Farm and grading floor staff should not move between operational areas without considering the biosecurity risks. Where possible, movement should occur from low-risk sites to high-risk sites. When the reverse is required, clean boots and clothing should be worn and strict hygiene principles applied.

BEST-PRACTICE CHECKLIST

The following biosecurity principles should be used by all egg farms and egg grading facilities in day-to-day operations. The 12 principles can be used as a best-practice checklist to minimise the risk of SE contamination.

	1	RESPONSIBILITY: Does the site have a competent biosecurity coordinator?
	2	TRAINING: Are all personnel entering biosecurity areas aware of the site's biosecurity procedures?
	3	FACILITIES: Does the site have a fully fenced biosecurity area and perimeter change room?
	4	PERSONNEL: Do personnel entering the biosecurity area change into clean clothes and boots and wash hands?
	5	PEST CONTROL AND ANIMALS: Are there any uncontrolled pests, wild birds and animals?
	6	INPUTS: Is there quality control on all inputs, including feed, day-old chicks, pullets and drinking water?
	7	TRANSPORTATION: Are there agreed approval processes and instructions for all suppliers servicing the site?
	8	DISPOSALS: Are hygienic practices in place for the disposal of discarded eggs, dead birds, feed, litter and general waste from the site?
	9	CLEANING AND DISINFECTION: Are there thorough cleaning and disinfection procedures in place?
	10	HEALTH: Is the site serviced by a poultry veterinarian?
	11	TESTING AND CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS: Is swab testing being done at critical points in the production processes? e.g. cleanout
	12	AUDITS: Is there internal and external auditing of all biosecurity principles?

If you answer "NO" to any of the above, biosecurity needs to be strengthened to protect your farm.