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Vehicles

Everyone places vehicles high on their list of biosecurity risks, when often it is not the vehicle but what it is carrying (people, feed, equipment, chicks, birds, eggs, bedding material etc) that represents the greater risk. Having said this, all of these things can be contaminated by micro-organisms present on the lorry.

The closer the lorry gets to the birds the greater the risk it represents to them and obviously this applies most to those it actually carries. The situation in which the vehicle is a real risk is the bird lorry that comes to the farm to collect thinnings. For example, when acute Gumboro disease spread through the UK at the end of the last century it was introduced to many broiler farms in this way.

Drivers

The drivers themselves represent a real risk, especially if they get into the habit of going into the poultry houses to find somebody once they get to the farm. This risk can be eliminated by the installing of a klaxon at the farm gate or agreeing a procedure of contacting the farm manager on his mobile to advise him of the arrival of the vehicle. Of course you could also lock the gate.

Another approach is to design the farm layout so that neither the lorry nor the driver need to come on the farm. A good example of this is the positioning of feed bins by the perimeter fence so that they can be filled from the outside of the fence.

Cleaning

Cleaning of the vehicle should focus on three areas – the area in which goods are carried, the driver's cab and the underside, including wheel arches.

The main perceived risk (other than to its load) is from something falling off the lorry or from within its wheel arches. Most debris of this nature should normally have been shaken off the lorry during its journey to the farm. This being so, one could question the logic of blasting around the inside of the wheel arch with a power spray – a process which must surely loosen debris which was otherwise well attached.

Of course we should always remember that if it is not essential for a vehicle to enter the farm then the best way of controlling any biosecurity risk associated with that vehicle is to keep it off the farm!

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