

Top 10 farm gate hygiene activities

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Plant Biosecurity & Product Integrity, Orange

Introduction

Best practice farm-gate hygiene can stop the spread of pests and diseases, including phylloxera. These top 10 farm gate hygiene activities are to assist you with your biosecurity practices.

Farm-gate hygiene activities are site-specific biosecurity practices that minimise the risk of introducing and/or spreading unwanted pests, diseases and weeds on your property. These farm-gate hygiene activities should form part of your standard operating procedures.

Adherence to farm-gate hygiene systems should be an expectation for all 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.

What is vineyard biosecurity?

Vineyard biosecurity:

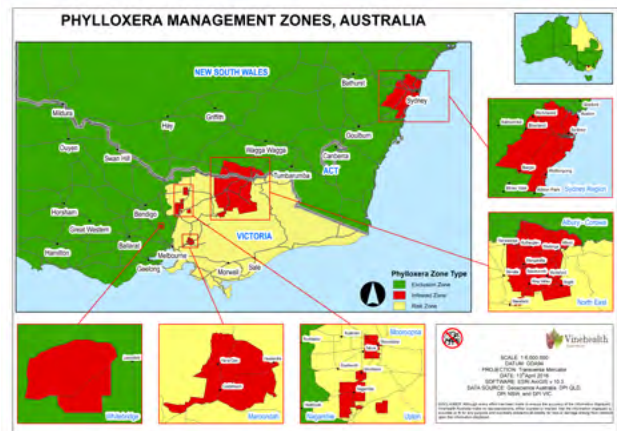
- is a set of activities focused on awareness and industry preparedness to protect a vineyard from the entry and or spread of pests, diseases and weeds
- involves implementing biosecurity measures so growers can play a key role in protecting their vineyards and the Australian viticulture industry from exotic pests. If a new or exotic pest was to occur in a vineyard, it would severely impact business continuity (increased production costs and market access) and reduce productivity (yield and/or quality)
- enables early detection and immediate reporting for effective and efficient management and or eradication of an exotic pest
- everyone's responsibility, including every person visiting or working on a vineyard.



If you can tick off these top 10 farm-gate hygiene activities, you are doing your bit to keep your vines safe and you are contributing to the security of the NSW wine industry.

1. Regularly review your links with interstate vineyards, wineries, contractors and suppliers

- always abide by your 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. Provide training on hygiene protocols to all staff, including contract and casual labour

- ensure your staff understand why adherence to these protocols will help to keep the vines healthy
- include farm-gate hygiene requirements in your staff induction processes
- train vineyard staff in effective vineyard monitoring, what to look for and the importance of reporting anything unusual
- ensure your staff are familiar with the locations of Phylloxera Infested Zones and Phylloxera Risk Zones in Australia



3. Control access to your vineyard

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



4. Use clear appropriate signage

- use signs to advise restrictions on entry to your property
- use farm-gate signs for operational entrances, require all visitors to report on entry to the vineyard office and include a contact number for the site manager
- use consumer-friendly signs for tourist entrances such as cellar doors, restaurants and accommodation areas
- convey visitor expectations on your signs, such as 'Please don't walk amongst my vines'



5. Restrict access to the vines

- on arrival at your property, require all visitors to report to your office to assess the risk they pose in introducing pests, diseases and weeds to the vineyard
- ensure access to vines only under controlled conditions
- keep a visitor log, recording vineyard regions each visitor has visited for at least the 29 days prior and check whether they have been to a vineyard in a Phylloxera Infested Zone or a Phylloxera Risk Zone in Victoria, New South Wales or Queensland



6. Have a designated parking area

- provide visitor parking for vehicles away from vines on a hard pack surface
- do not allow unauthorised vehicles to drive within your vineyard as they can introduce and spread pests, diseases and weeds
- if visitors must enter the vineyard, provide a vineyard vehicle for use
- if the visitor vehicle must enter the vineyard for operational purposes, ensure the vehicle is decontaminated before entry
- determine which vineyard regions the vehicle has visited in the past month and allow entry only under supervised, controlled conditions



7. Regularly inspect vines

- regularly inspect your vines for anything unusual
- know the high priority exotic pests and diseases and regulated endemic pests (including grape phylloxera) for the grape and wine industries
- know what times of the season these pests or diseases are likely to be identified and time your monitoring activities accordingly
- take pictures of what you see so you can verify your findings
- know where to seek help to identify the problem and be comfortable in contacting them willingly because you understand the potential impact of an outbreak of a high priority plant pest
- report anything unusual to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881, or email biosecurity@dpi.nsw.gov.au



8. Monitor all machinery and equipment

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



9. Acknowledge the risk that footwear and clothing can pose in picking up and spreading pests, diseases and weeds

- evaluate the risk of footwear and clothing and only allow vine access under controlled conditions depending on where the footwear and clothing have been worn in the previous 29 days
- if entry is granted to your vines, ensure all people who come onto your property either disinfect their footwear upon entry and exit following the current Footwear and Small Hand Tool Disinfestation Protocol, or provide 'safe shoes' such as property rubber boots or work boots
- follow guidelines in NSW DPI's 'Biosecurity Planning for Vineyard Owners Hosting Visitors' factsheet for clothing



10. Only acquire pest-free planting material

- acknowledge that planting with pest-free propagation material is likely to prolong the health of your vineyard and provide you with the greatest chance of producing the yield and quality desired
- when buying planting material, verify its health status by asking for a documented history of virus test results from source blocks or mother vines
- do not accept propagation material of unknown origin
- ask for proof of the nursery's accreditation
- always conduct virus testing of both scion and rootstock before you consider top-working or grafting
- if there are any vine health issues with newly planted or grafted vines, immediately notify your nursery and conduct testing to identify the problem



Best practice

- Good biosecurity measures ensure the ongoing sustainability of the NSW wine industry
- The decision-making process is crucial to protect your vineyard biosecurity
- Everyone has a responsibility to mitigate biosecurity risks
- Protect your vineyard – it is your asset!
- Contact the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881, or email biosecurity@dpi.nsw.gov.au if you see anything unusual.

More information

Need help with biosecurity management or these Top 10 activities?

Visit <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/horticulture/grapes> or phone 1800 680 244

Acknowledgement

The Top 10 farm-gate hygiene activities is a collaboration between the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Vinehealth Australia. For more information go to www.vinehealth.com.au

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