

Visitors on the Farm

In addition to biosecurity protocols, farms and farm businesses should have a protocol for visitors on the property. Know who is coming when, and what processes you expect from newcomers. If you have an office, and you expect visitors to report there, clearly mark the building.

Tip: Download a sample [visitor sign-in log](#) here.

Identifying visitors

Be aware that not everyone arriving at the farm is the person they claim to be. Occasionally people misrepresent themselves to gain access to your property or specific information.

Government or agency representatives such as CFIA or SPCA – will be required to identify themselves appropriately. Know your rights and responsibilities.

Service providers should be expected to identify themselves appropriately by presenting company identification. *Note: never trust a business card alone, as they are easy to manufacture.*

Students/media/members of the public: Ideally, someone who is not doing business on your farm will have phoned or emailed ahead of time to plan a visit. Don't be embarrassed to ask for photo identification when they arrive and record their visit in your farm's visitor log the same as any other business call.

Tip: Be clear about your farm's policies such as photo-taking, farm safety and biosecurity before you escort visitors anywhere on your property.

Dealing with unwanted visitors

Occasionally, unwelcome visitors may arrive on the farm. If someone has arrived on your property and you want them to leave, be sure to say so. If you end up having to call the police later, the responding officers will need to know that you have asked the individual(s) to leave and they refused.

Dealing with protestors

We live in a democracy – everyone has a right to protest something they disagree with. Whether protestors show up at your property, or you encounter them elsewhere, know how to handle the situation appropriately:

- Do not engage in any conversation or argument with demonstrators.
- Avoid confrontation of any sort.
- Assume any interactions are being filmed.

Protestors are permitted in public areas such as a sidewalk or roadway, but not on private property.

Tip: If protestors show up, do what you can to cancel unnecessary traffic for the day, including deliveries that aren't essential. The least action protestors see at a demonstration, the higher the chances they'll move on for another place to protest.

Using the SCAN principle

Anyone who works or lives on the farm should be trained and encouraged to use the **SCAN principle** in non-threatening situations. You might use it to approach a person in a parked car near your property, or someone who is in an area of your facility that he or she is not authorized to be in.

See something unusual? Suspicious?

Contact

Ask questions

Notify

See something unusual? Suspicious?

- Notice a stranger on the road, taking pictures? Someone on the property who doesn't work here?
- Is a stranger asking probing questions?
- Is someone in an area of the property where they shouldn't be?
- Is someone acting strangely or is their behavior unacceptable?

Contact

- Make contact with the person, *but only if you determine it is safe to do so.*

Ask questions

- “Can I help you?”
- “My family lives here, and we'd like to know what you're up to.”
- “Is there something you need?”
- “Did you have a question about something?”

Offer to take them where they are supposed to be. Escort them.

Notify (This is the most important step!)

- Make note of what you saw and provide to one designated point person (such as the farm owner.)
- Skip the previous steps and contact your point person immediately if you feel safety or security is at risk at any time.
- What you encounter could feed into reports of what others saw – and if something goes wrong, these reports will help build a case for the police.

Tip: A group called The Ag & Food Exchange (AFX) tracks suspicious activity on Canadian farms. Contact AFX's confidential service if you have something to share. There is no cost, and reporting it can help track trends in a specific region or commodity.