



BIOSECURITY: FOOT BATHS

CPC REFRESHER COURSE & QUIZ

FOOT BATHS – WHY THEY MATTER

Foot baths are a simple but essential biosecurity tool. They help stop diseases from entering or spreading between poultry houses by disinfecting boots before anyone steps from a dirty to a clean area. When used correctly, foot baths reduce the risk of introducing viruses, bacteria, or parasites that can cause major flock losses.



BASIC PRINCIPLES

- Foot baths must be placed at the entrance of every poultry house and anywhere movement shifts from a “dirty” to a “clean” zone for example office entrances, barn entrances, last door before meeting the birds.
- Choose a disinfectant suitable for footbaths
- Every person must use the foot bath before entering and when moving between sections. No exceptions.

HOW TO USE FOOT BATHS CORRECTLY

1. Remove visible dirt first. Disinfectant only works on clean surfaces—mud or manure must be washed off boots before stepping in the foot bath. Disinfectants are rapidly inactivated when in contact with organic matter.
2. Fully immerse the sole and sides of both boots in the disinfectant each time you pass a foot bath.
3. Stand in the bath for the required contact time usually a few seconds—follow the disinfectant label.
4. Step onto clean, dry, slip resistant flooring after stepping through the foot bath.

MAINTENANCE OF FOOT BATHS

- Change the disinfectant daily, or sooner if the solution becomes dirty. Dirty solutions lose effectiveness quickly.
- Using the correct concentration—too weak is useless, too strong can damage boots or be unsafe.
- Foot bath containers must be large enough for full immersion and designed to prevent spills.
- Keep the area around the foot bath clean and dry to avoid tracking contamination.
- Ensure the bath is covered or shaded to prevent sun, dust, or rain from reducing its effectiveness.

Did you know?

A single gram of chicken manure can contain over **one billion bacteria**—and some viruses can survive on boots for **up to 48 hours** if not properly disinfected.

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COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

- Leaving disinfectant unchanged for several days or in direct sunlight.
- Using foot baths without cleaning boots first.
- Placing foot baths far from the entrance.
- Allowing baths to dry up or overflow.
- Skipping the bath during quick tasks.

KEY REMINDER

Foot baths only work when they are clean, correct, and consistently used. Proper boot disinfection protects flock health, prevents disease outbreaks, and supports strong farm biosecurity.

Biosecurity Boots vs Field Boots



1) What is the main purpose of a foot dip on a poultry farm?

- A. To clean boots for comfort
- B. To reduce the spread of disease between areas
- C. To make boots last longer
- D. To keep the floor dry

2) How often should the disinfectant in a foot dip be changed?

- A. Once a week
- B. Only when it smells
- C. Daily or whenever it becomes dirty
- D. Every two weeks

3) Which of the following makes a foot dip ineffective?

- A. Using the correct concentration
- B. Cleaning boots before dipping
- C. Placing the foot dip directly at the entrance
- D. Allowing the disinfectant to become dirty or too weak

4) Which factor is MOST important for a disinfectant to work effectively in a foot dip?

- A. The color of the disinfectant
- B. Using the correct dilution/concentration
- C. The smell of the chemical
- D. The size of the boot dip container

5) True or False: Canadian Poultry Consultants can provide professional guidance on selecting the correct disinfectant products and verify that all farm disinfectants are mixed at the proper dilution.

- A. True
- B. False

Answer Key:
5. A
4. B
3. D
2. C
1. B

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