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Preventing pests and diseases in the greenhouse

Control what goes into your clean zone

The aim of having a clean zone is so that you can more easily keep the area in and around your crop clean and free from pests and diseases.

Once the clean zone has been set up, you need to control everything that moves into it.

Check and control points are places, items and practices around the farm that ensure pests and diseases are not accidentally carried into the clean zone.

Movement of staff/workers and visitors around the farm is one of the most common ways for pests and diseases to spread.



Always check people, vehicles, plants and materials.



There are many different check and controls that can be used:

- A gate or rope across the road
- A sign telling visitors not to enter
- A footbath
- A vehicle washing bay
- A cleaning station
- Work procedures explaining how jobs are to be done
- Work procedures describing what order greenhouses are to be worked
- A loading dock on the boundary between the two zones

This **Preventing pests and diseases in the greenhouse** fact sheet is part of a series designed to show how simple low cost changes around the greenhouse can significantly reduce costs and losses from pests and diseases.

For more information please refer to the growers' guidelines "Keep it Clean" published by NSW Department of Primary Industries or go online: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

The development of these materials was assisted by Horticulture Australia Ltd, through the national vegetable levy.

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A greenhouse farm in South West Sydney consistently had pests and diseases getting into crops planted in tunnel houses closest to an adjacent farm. Two problems were found. Firstly, there was no barrier between the farms and so problems could 'blow' across. Secondly, people visiting the adjacent farm did not notice the boundary and simply walked over bringing pests and diseases with them.

The boundary fence was repaired with new wires and immediately uninvited visitors stopped bringing over problems. A hedgerow was planted to create a barrier between the farms.

While pest levels have not changed yet, a key disease (Fusarium) has been kept out. Prior to controlling entry, Fusarium generally could be found on more than 20 in every 100 cucumber plants for the previous 3 crops. Fusarium did not get into the latest crop.