



Fact Sheet

On-farm clean-down facilities

Vehicle and machinery surfaces often collect soil and plant debris. This represents a biosecurity risk because many plant pests, such as bacteria, fungi, viruses, viroids, nematodes, and insects (and insect eggs), can remain stable in soil and plant matter for long periods.

A clean-down facility is an area where growers, farm workers, extension officers and contractors can clean and disinfect all vehicles and machinery entering or leaving growing areas. Regular use of the facility will go a long way towards reducing the chance of introducing pests to a property and spreading pests to other regions.

Step 1 - Clean down

Clean all incoming and outgoing vehicles and machinery using a high pressure water hose or compressed air to remove any plant debris and soil. Focus on areas where soil or plant debris may be trapped, e.g. tyre treads and wheel arches.

Step 2 - Decontaminate

Apply a decontaminant solution to all vehicle surfaces where soil and plant material may stick. Decontaminant solutions include antibacterial, antifungal and antiviral agents and should be used according to product label recommendations.

Step 3 - Rinse the clean-down facility

Before moving the vehicle, use a high pressure water hose on the clean-down facility to make sure debris is captured in the sump area. Before moving the vehicle away from the clean-down facility, allow it to dry thoroughly – this will lessen the amount of dirt picked up by tyre treads.

Cleaning of vehicles and machinery is a big step towards minimising threats from plant pests and diseases. However, biosecurity measures do not end at the clean-down facility.



Carry a portable cleaning system on property

Keeping resident plant pests confined to parts of the property will have short and long term benefits for production yield and market access.

To stop pest spread between growing areas use a portable high pressure water hose or air compressor to clean vehicles, machinery and farm equipment before moving to a new area.

When developing a clean-down facility consider...

Location

Use an open area close to property entrances and located as far as possible from growing areas.

Drainage

Keep flow-off away from access to drainage lines to avoid contaminating water sources. A sump or waste water collection area is recommended for drainage of water, soil and plant debris.

Size

Ensure there is enough room for large machines and vehicles to enter and move around.

Cleaning equipment

Dedicated high pressure hoses or compressed air cleaners will make the cleaning process more effective.

Surface

Concrete or bitumen is ideal. A grassed surface is not recommended due to the potential for some pests to incubate in soil and on plant matter.

Signage

Clean-down areas should be sign-posted and directions provided from the property entrance to the clean-down facility. This will ensure that visitors are aware of the clean-down facility and can report to it on arrival.

