

Introduction

As there are no control measures available for Panama TR4 implementing a range of on-farm biosecurity practices is essential to reducing the likelihood of Panama Tropical Race 4, or any other pest or disease entering your property. As with all aspects of on-farm biosecurity, you should first focus on how you can exclude people, machinery, vehicles or equipment, before you think about treating them. By following the process of Assess, Identify, Implement, Inform you are well on your way to implementing effective biosecurity zoning. Zoning provides simple and cost effective biosecurity layers which manage disease risk pathways onto and off your farm.

Zones

Zoning is the division of the farm into separate areas. For effective on-farm biosecurity, three zones are required, these include exclusion, separation and farming.

EXCLUSION
This zone is for non-essential vehicles for visitor and staff car parking at the farm entrance

SEPARATION
This zone is the roadway for essential vehicles that need to come on-farm. This could include fruit pick-up trucks, fertiliser or fuel delivery, waste pick-up

FARMING
This zone is where farm vehicles, machinery, and equipment operate. Vehicles, machinery or tools should not enter or exit this area without appropriate decontamination



Figure 1: Example of how the zones would work in a farm where the packing shed is in the middle of property. A key change would be to ensure that farm vehicles are not cutting across the separation zone to reach the other side of farm.

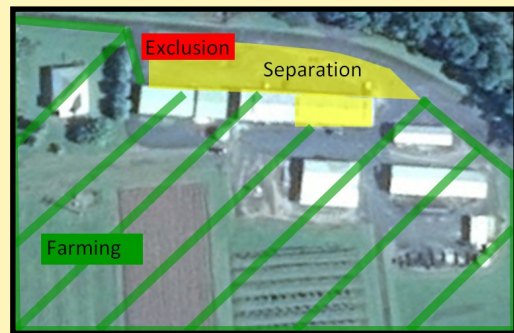


Figure 2: Example of a packing shed that is next to the roadway. Key changes include moving fuel tanks and rubbish collection points to edges of separation zone.

Packing sheds require close examination, as part of the separation and farming zone will both extend into this area. This means that knowing where to draw the line between zones can be tricky. This point may fall where bunches are washed.

Summary

Zoning your farm allows you to determine how you should manage and move between areas. These zones can be defined with physical barriers (fencing), signage, footwear, wash-down facilities, drainage, road surfaces or delivery/collection points.

A fundamental factor when implementing zoning is to keep your dirt on your farm and everyone else's off your farm.

Managing waste from wash down and decontamination is a key consideration, with waste to be managed appropriately.

Cost is a key factor in determining what measure you may put in place. It is important to assess all risks before acting to ensure that you are targeting the areas of highest impact. It is also important to inform relevant service providers of any changes you may be making on-farm that will affect them, this will allow them time to adjust to your new requirements.

A key element of zoning is that it creates a biosecurity system that is layered. By having a layered approach to biosecurity, it spreads the biosecurity risk across a range of measures, as no single biosecurity practice is 100% effective.