



AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

Implementing biosecurity practices is to your farm and industry's benefit

“**B**iosecurity is managing the herd to prevent the introduction and spread of infectious diseases,” says John B. Adams, director of animal health and farm services for the National Milk Producers Federation.

Within a couple of weeks of this issue being published, the proAction program's biosecurity module will have taken effect. These new biosecurity requirements outline the steps producers are required to follow, which include having:

- a risk assessment record;
- a disease event record;
- four standard operating procedures, including vaccination, introduction of new cattle to the herd, returning cattle to the herd and control of human movement;
- biosecurity signage.

Anyone owning or working on a dairy farm is well aware of the potential impact a disease outbreak or pest can have on the bottom line. A disease outbreak is not only devastating to a herd's well-being, resulting in reduced milk production and increased replacement costs, veterinary costs and labour requirements, it can negatively impact the industry's image. Biosecurity and disease prevention also play a role in increased attention on reducing antimicrobial use. Implementing biosecurity programs not only prevents and reduces the risk of disease entering and spreading on farms in the first place, it helps ensure the future viability of your farm and those surrounding it.

According to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, farm-level biosecurity management practices can prevent and control:

- introduction of infectious disease agents onto a farm;
- spread within a farm production operation;
- export of these disease agents beyond the farm that may have an adverse effect on the economy, environment and human health.

You, your family and farm workers have a responsibility to implement and follow sound biosecurity practices at all times—after all, it is to your farm's benefit. Essentially, biosecurity practices should be considered part of your business risk assessment.

Canada is not alone when it comes to putting comprehensive biosecurity protocols in place. Many other countries have varying degrees of programs to help farmers protect their livelihoods and the food system. For instance, Australia's farm biosecurity awareness campaign is a joint initiative between Animal Health Australia and Plant Health Australia on behalf of their members. It encourages producers to identify risks to their livestock, crops and plant products, as well as minimize those risks through good practices.

Thankfully, the Canadian dairy industry has not had to deal with a major disease outbreak that has the potential to damage the sector's image and erode consumer trust. However, one can never be too careful. With more spotlight being placed on the sector through increased media attention, growing animal activism and greater consumer concern about food safety, it is only prudent the industry create a safe environment that enables the continued production of high-quality milk Canadians have come to enjoy.

NO TRESPASSING/ BIOSECURITY SIGN

By now, you should have received your free no trespassing/biosecurity sign provided by Dairy Farmers of Ontario (DFO) and delivered via your milk transporter.

If you have not received your free sign, or would like to order an additional one, contact Chantel Crockett, DFO's event specialist and dairy producer committee liaison, at chantel.crockett@milk.org.

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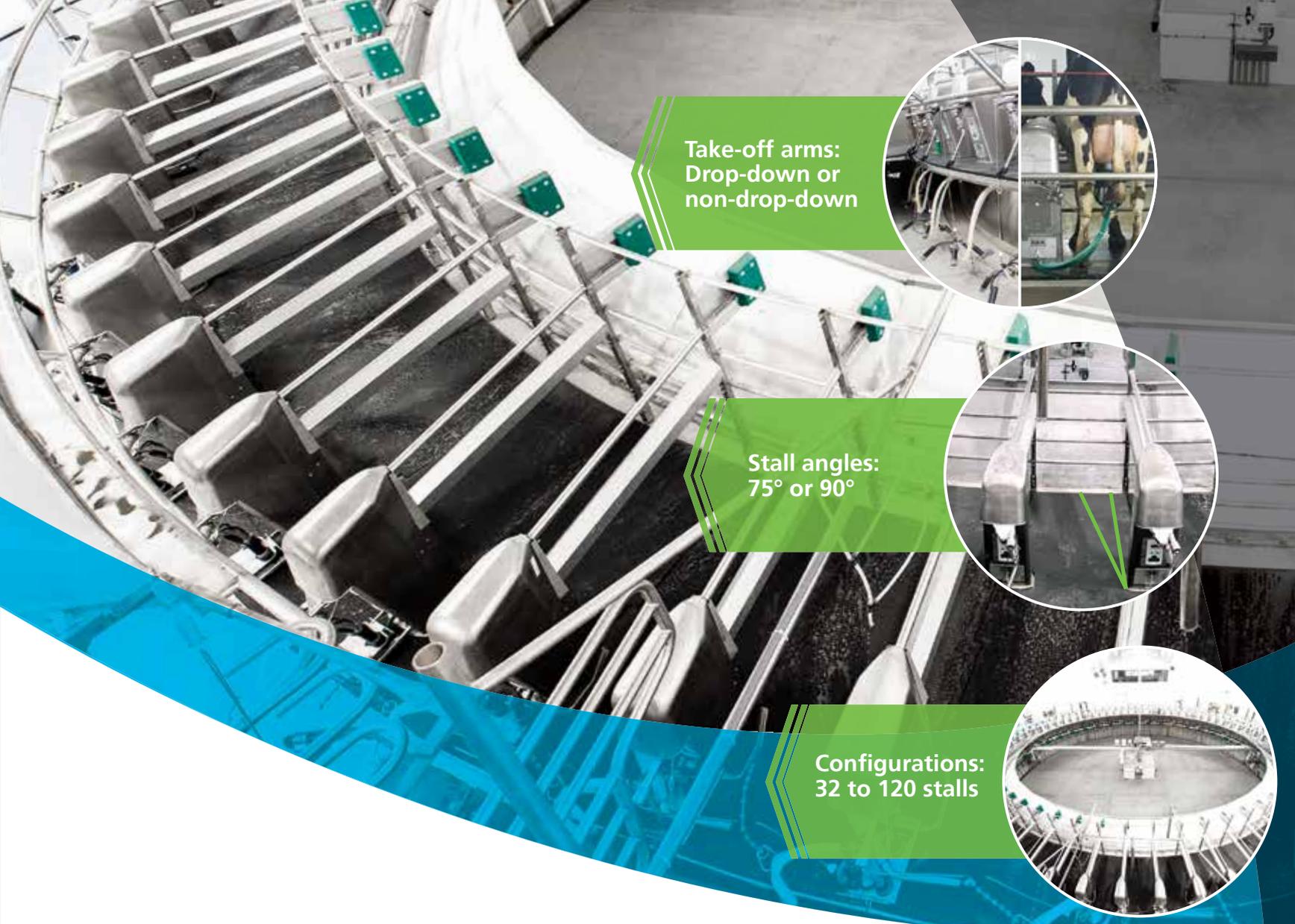
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Configurations:
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