

A biosecurity scoring tool for Irish dairy farmers

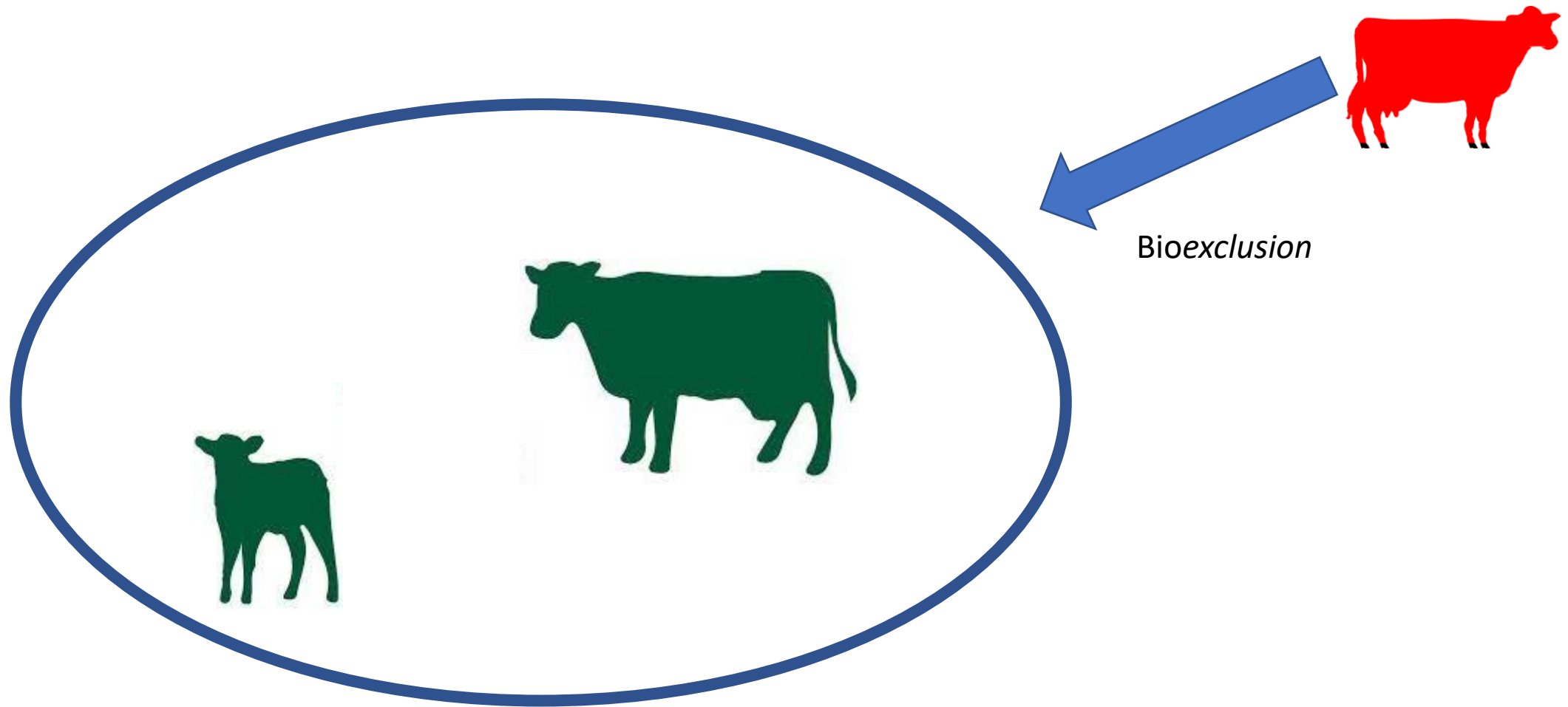
Conor McAloon



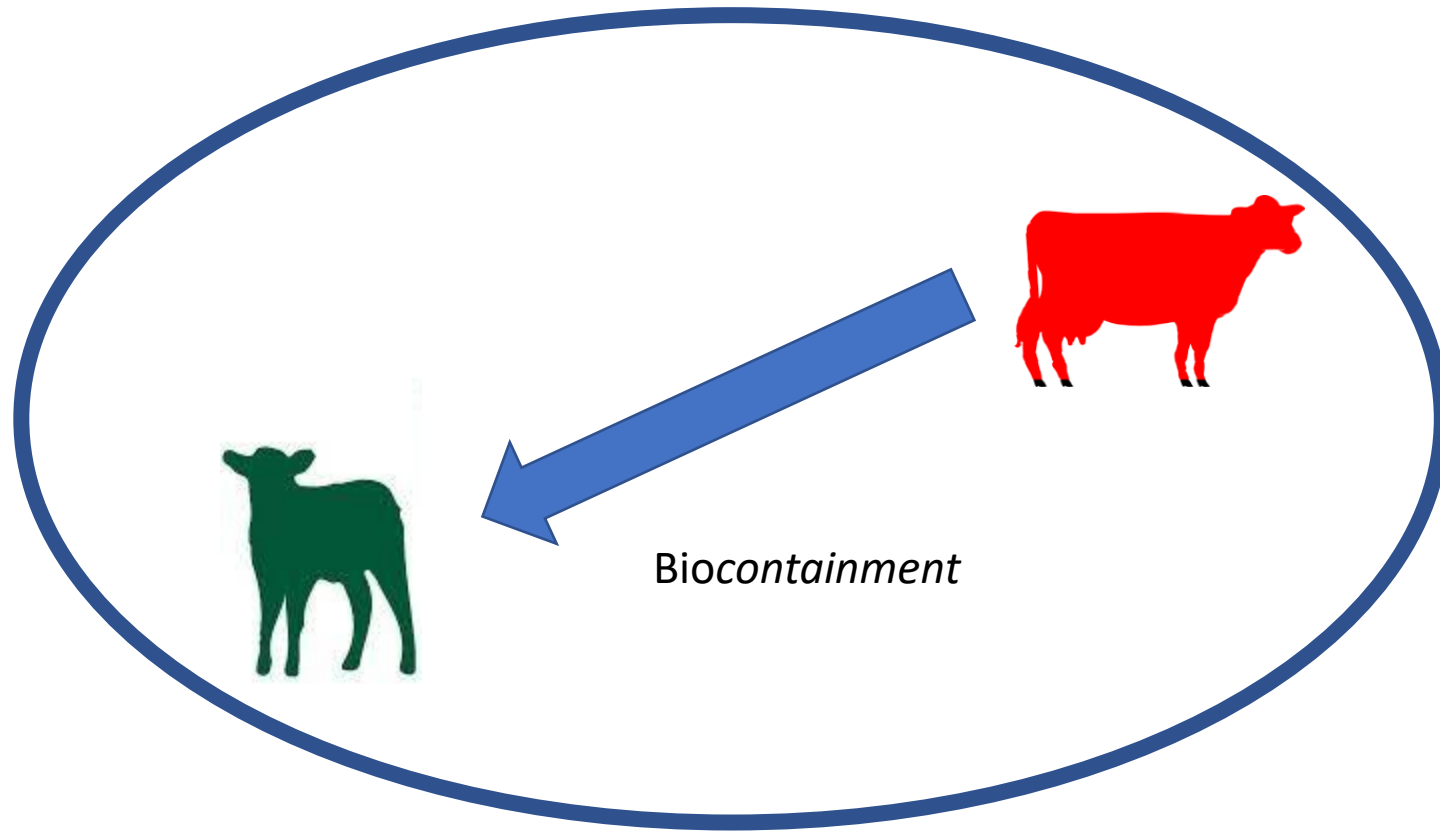
Biosecurity

- *Prevention is better than the cure*

Biosecurity



Biosecurity



Supporting research

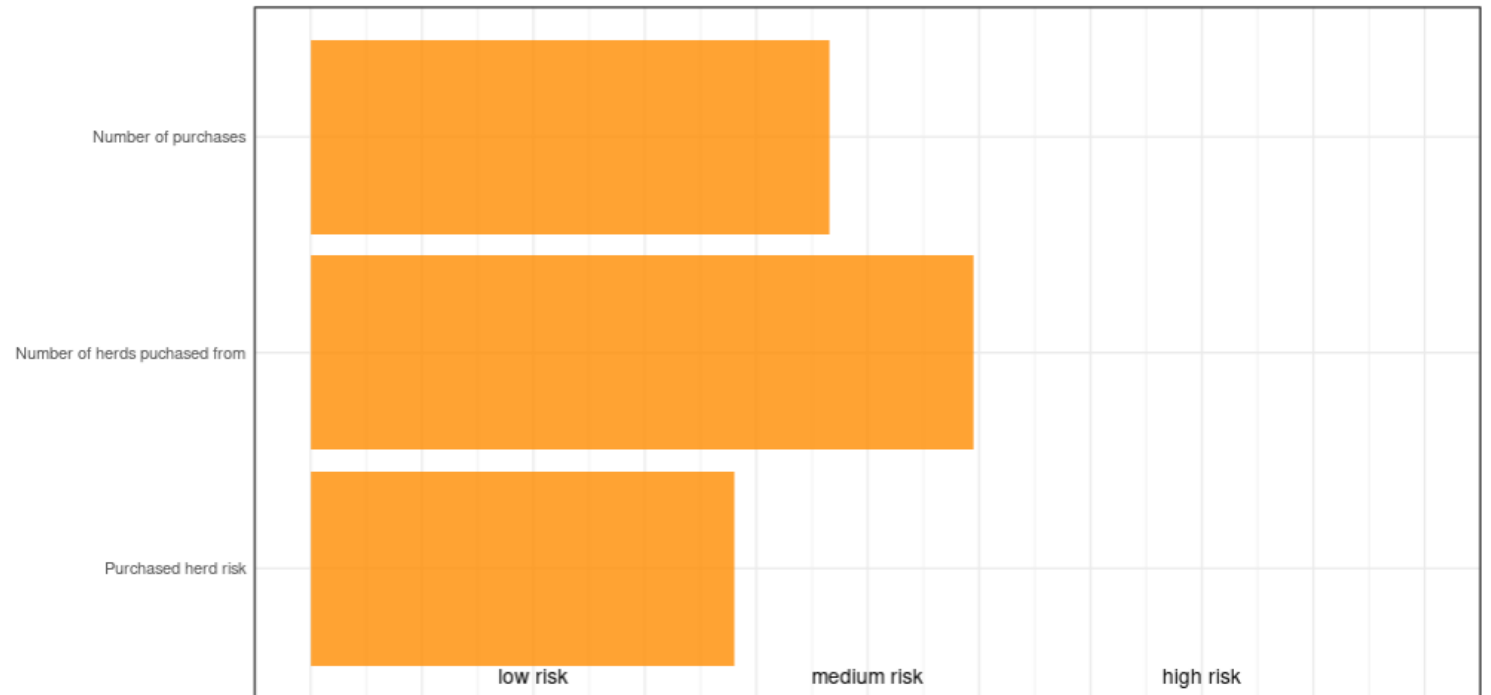
- One barrier to adoption of biosecurity practices is lack of evidence of economic benefit to the farmer
- Two pieces of research carried out as part of SWAB to address this knowledge gap:
 - *“Specifically, we found that vaccination and testing bulk tank milk for diseases were significantly associated with better economic outcomes for dairy farms.”* (Osawe et al., 2022)
 - *“Our study suggests that implementation of recommended biocontainment practices to control paratuberculosis in IJCP herds was associated with a reduction in calf mortality hazard.”* (McAloon et al., 2022)

The SWAB biosecurity scoring tool

- Based on these supporting studies, the SWAB biosecurity scoring tool was developed
- Draws on existing tools from other countries
- The tool allows farmers to benchmark their biosecurity practices against their peers according to:
 - Animal introductions
 - Bioexclusion practices
 - Biocontainment practices

Benchmarking biosecurity for Irish dairy herds

- Animal introductions



Over the past 5 years, your herd has brought in 15 cattle* from 9 different herds. Compared with similar dairy herd types, your herd is:
around average risk for number of animals purchased;
around average risk for number of herds purchased from;
and around average risk for 'purchased herd risk'**.

Benchmarking biosecurity for Irish dairy herds

- Management questionnaire

Summary

Your herd is exposed to a **HIGH** risk of disease entry. Disease spread on farm is likely to be **FAST**. Herd immunity from available vaccines is **MODERATE**.

Disease entry

Primary category: C

Your herd is in the highest primary risk category due to the introduction of animals. Discuss whether the business could move to a lower primary risk category. If this is not possible then look to reduce your secondary score.

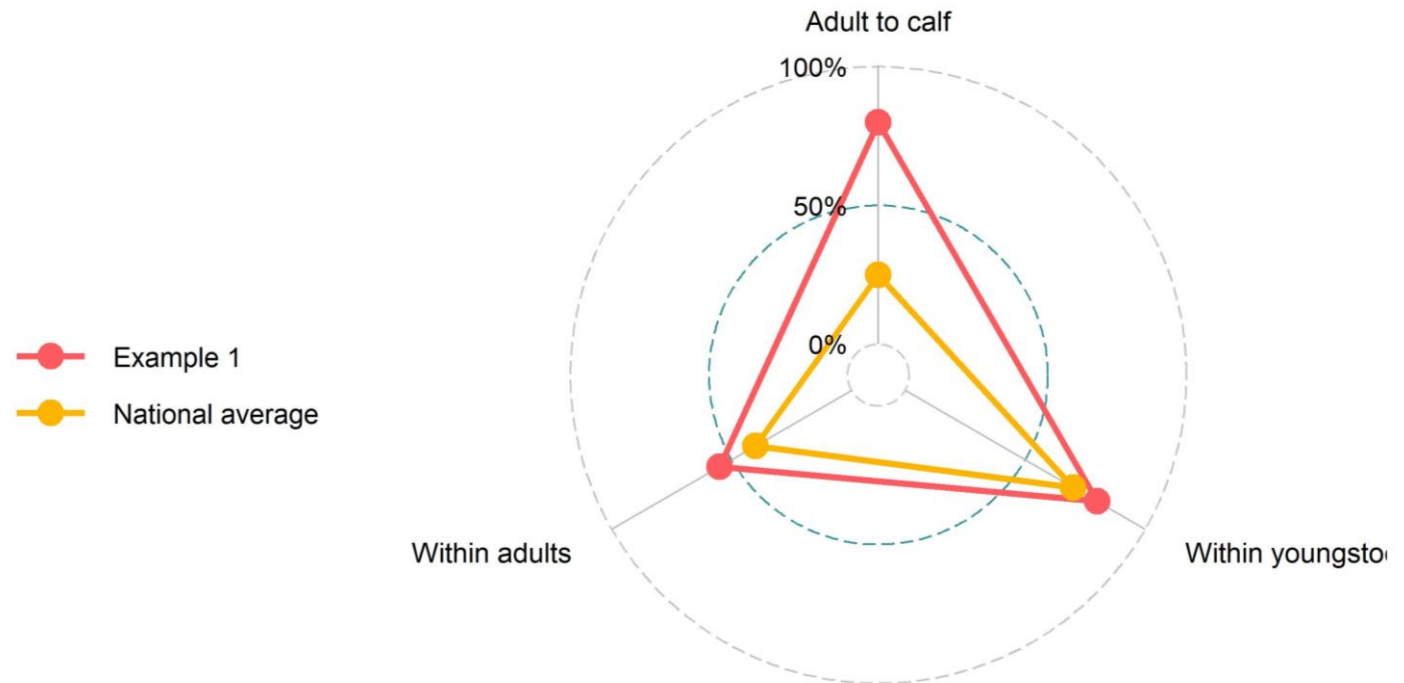
Secondary score: 4

There are opportunities to reduce the risk of disease entry by changing how animals are sourced, quarantined and handled after arrival. Discuss these opportunities with your vet to help identify any actions that would benefit your business.

Benchmarking biosecurity for Irish dairy herds

- Biocontainment

Disease spread



There are opportunities to slow the spread of disease on farm. Priority areas to consider are from the adult herd to youngstock.

Benchmarking biosecurity for Irish dairy herds

- Vaccination

Vaccination

Group	Vaccine coverage
Very young calves	High
Growing calves	Moderate
Yearlings	Low
Adult	Low

There are opportunities to improve herd level immunity against common infectious diseases through increased use of vaccination.