



Bio-Security Module BSM21:

AUDIT FUNCTIONS OF THE FARM AUDIT GROUPS

(Version 2.2: October 2011)

OBJECTIVE

To provide clear guidance on steps to be followed in setting up Farm Audit Groups, audit procedures to be followed in undertaking audits and the aspects to be included in the audits of all registered ostrich farms

BACKGROUND

A number of different levels of audit are proposed. Firstly, the primary audit function will be based on a form of self-auditing by way of registered Farm Audit Groups. Secondly, an independent external audit should be undertaken on a less frequent basis (once or twice per year) by a professional independent audit group. Thirdly, the Provincial State Veterinarian (or his representatives) will undertake a mandatory annual audit as part of the annual re-registration of farms. This BSM deals with the first level of audit by way of the Farm Audit Groups in order to audit compliance with BSMs 01, 05, 10 and 11.

FARM AUDIT GROUPS

All registered ostrich farms are required to belong to a registered Farm Audit Group and each Farm Audit Group will comprise of between 5 and 10 members.

The registration of a Farm Audit Group is done by completing Form BSM21/003 and submitting the completed form to the SAOBC who will then provide the Farm Audit Group with an Audit Group Registration Number. Key requirements when registering a Farm Audit Group are as follows:

1. Registered farms must be grouped, on a voluntary basis, into Farm Audit Groups of no less than 5 farms and no more than 10 farms per group with a limiting condition that each Farm Audit Group must comprise at least 3 separate unrelated owners (i.e. a single owner of 5 farms may not form a Farm Audit Group of his own five farms).
2. Every registered ostrich farm must belong to a registered Farm Audit Group, a farm that is not part of a Registered Farm Audit Group cannot be registered as an ostrich farm.
3. After receipt of Form BSM21/003, the SAOBC will complete the Form by adding in a Farm Audit Group Registration Number and an expiry date. The completed BSM21/003 with its registration number will then be sent back to the Farm Audit Group Leader who will then submit a copy to each member of the Farm Audit Group,
4. If a member of a Farm Audit Group decides to leave that Audit Group, then Form BSM21/003 must immediately be resubmitted to the SAOBC with the amended list of members and a new official Audit Group registration number will be issued.
5. The farm leaving the Farm Audit Group must either be entered into another Farm Audit Group (which will also have to submit a new Form BSM21/003 to include the new member) or the farm will be de-registered as an ostrich farm with immediate effect.
6. Form BSM21/003 requires all members in the Farm Audit Group to provide the farm name, farm owner name, farm registration number, farm audit status (see Section below) and the signature of the farm owner.
7. The first member entered into the form will be deemed to be the Farm Audit Group Leader who will receive training on the various BSMs and the audit process. The Group Leader will then be required to, in turn, train the other members of his/her Farm Audit Group.
8. Form BSM21/003 also includes a section where the planned schedule of farm audits for the next 12 months is indicated, together with an allocation of responsibility for each member as to which farm he/she will audit each month. The schedule also includes an agreed audit deadline date that indicates the date by which each Farm Audit Report (Form BSM21/004) must be submitted to the SAOBC. The allocation of auditors to each farm must be on a rotational basis with no auditor re-auditing a particular farm until all other auditors in the Farm Audit Group have also audited that farm.
9. No person may audit a farm where he or she has any ownership interest or any direct family connections with the owner of the farm.
10. Each farm owner must provide the auditor with the information they may request and he may not hinder or obstruct the auditor in performing his/her audit.
11. It is the responsibility of the appointed Auditor to submit the properly completed Farm Audit Report (Form BSM21/004) to the SAOBC on or before the audit deadline as specified above. Failure to comply with the audit deadline will be deemed to be an offence by the Auditor.
12. If the Auditor is unable to perform his/her audit function due to actions/obstructions on the part of the Audit Farm owner (or his representatives), then action will be taken against the owner of the Audit Farm.
13. It is permissible for a registered Farm Audit Group to appoint an external auditor to undertake the audits on behalf of one or more of the audit group members. However, the individual audit group members remain responsible for ensuring that the provisions of BSM21 are fully complied with and the sanctions referred to in paragraphs 11 and 12 above will still apply in the

event that the appointed external auditor fails to perform his/her duties in terms of this BSM21.

AUDITING PROCEDURES

The auditing schedule as set out in the approved BSM21/003 must be complied with and the monthly Farm Audit Reports must then be submitted to the SAOBC in accordance with the agreed audit deadlines.

14. Each farm must keep detailed records of how many ostriches are kept in the different camps in order that these records can be audited by the Auditor. The required information must be entered into the Monthly Ostrich Location Register (Form BSM21/006)
15. The Auditor must undertake the audit by fully completing the Farm Audit Report (Form BSM21/004).
16. If the external audits to be undertaken by independent auditors or the provincial or national veterinary departments find errors in the audits, all members of the audit group will be collectively investigated to determine the source of the error. In such an event, the relevant PSV will arrange an urgent meeting with all members of the Farm Audit Group to discuss the problem and appropriate actions may then be taken on a collective basis against one or more of the farms in the Farm Audit Group, depending on the findings of the PSV. In deciding on the appropriate actions to be taken, The PSV will be guided by the following considerations:
 - If errors are consistently found in the audits undertaken by a particular Auditor, then the corrective action may be best focused on the Auditor in question.
 - If errors are found in Audits undertaken by different Auditors and on different farms then the corrective action may need to be applied to all members of the Farm Audit Group.
 - If it is found that there is collusion amongst members of a Farm Audit Group to undertake substandard or incorrect audits, then the appropriate action may, as a worst case, involve action against all farms in the Audit Group.

AUDIT STATUS OF FARM

Provision is made to recognize the efforts of farms that consistently comply with all aspects of the audit. All farms will initially be classified as having a **Bronze** status. Bronze status farms which show three consecutive clean audits with no non-compliances will be elevated to **Silver** status. Silver Status farms that show three consecutive clean audits with no non-compliances will be elevated to **Gold** status. Any audit that includes a non-compliance will result in the farm in question dropping its status, i.e. Gold will drop to Silver and Silver will drop to Bronze.

The frequency of audits varies depending on the audit status of the farm as follows:

Bronze Audit Status: must be audited monthly

Silver Audit Status: must be audited every second month

Gold Audit Status: must be audited every third month

It is possible that farms that are classified as high risk farms may be maintained at a Bronze Audit Status level.

AUDIT OUTCOMES

Completed farm audit reports must be submitted to the SAOBC on the dates as set out in the approved BSM21/003 form schedule. The consequences of non-compliances recorded in the farm audit reports will be set out in VPN04.

The Audit Farm must keep copies of all Farm Audit Reports for a period of at least 5 years.

NOTES: This BSM21 must be used in conjunction with the following forms:

Form BSM21/003: Farm Audit Group Registration

Form BSM21/004: Farm Audit Report

Form BSM21/005: Monthly Ostrich Register

Form BSM21/006: Monthly Ostrich Location Register