



AHI BULLETIN

BVD: attention to biosecurity now will yield rewards next spring

Following the introduction of a series of enhancements to the national BVD eradication programme for 2017 [click here](#), good progress has been made over the first 5 months to date.

With over 70% of this year's calves born and tested, the prevalence of PI births has reduced by almost 50% from that seen in 2016, from 0.16% to 0.09%. In addition, the speed with which PI animals are being removed has increased, in response to measures including higher support payments for removal within 3 weeks of the date of the initial positive result and the restricting of herds that retain PIs for more than five weeks after that date. Figures to early June indicate that there are approximately 300 known PIs still alive, of which 44 have been retained beyond 5 weeks in 30 different herds.

As the breeding season has commenced, females in these herds are entering the window of susceptibility, between 30 and 120 days of pregnancy, during which the PIs that will be born next spring will be created. Clearly this risk is greatest for those herds which currently contain PIs, and the BVD Implementation Group strongly encourages their prompt removal.

It is also important that herds that are free of infection take measures to ensure that infection is not accidentally introduced. In

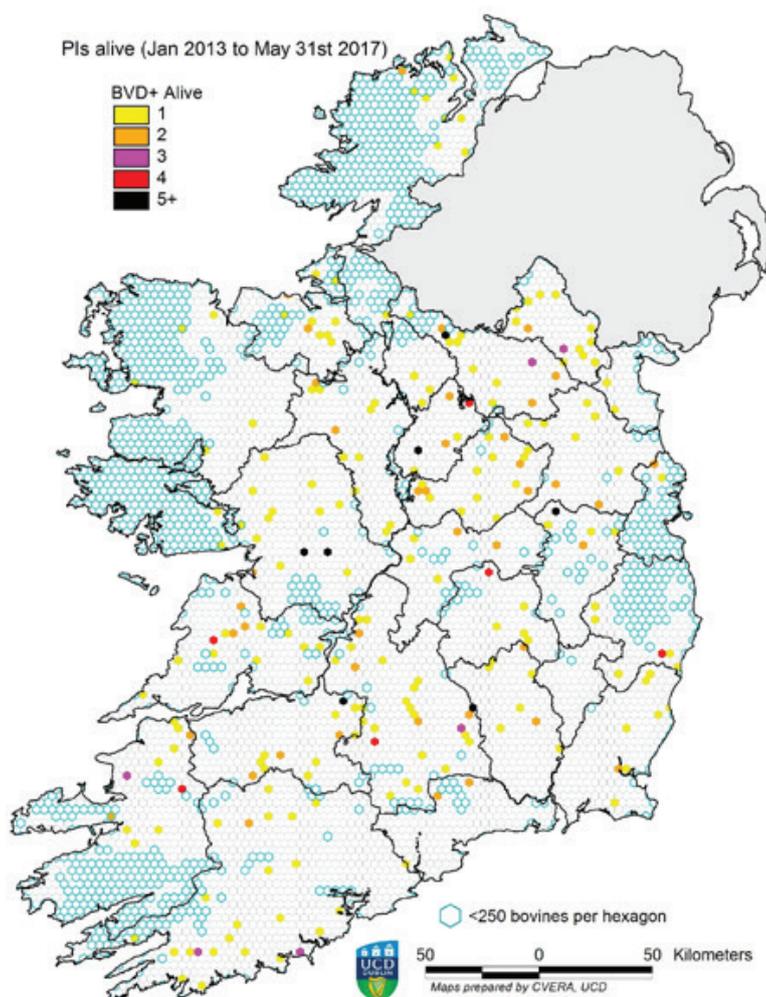


Figure 1. Distribution of known PIs alive at the end of May 2017

the absence of appropriate biosecurity measures, pregnant females are at risk. In the first instance, any animals of unknown status should be identified and tested. Thereafter, biosecurity should be reviewed to minimize the likelihood of introduction. In particular the following should be addressed:

- Purchased cattle, or those returning unsold or from shows should go through a quarantine process on entering the herd. They should be held in a quarantine facility (building or paddock) for at least 28 days, with particular care taken to avoid them coming in contact with pregnant stock. In-calf stock present a particular risk, as they may be carrying a PI calf.
- Contact with cattle across boundaries. Cattle should not graze at boundaries where nose to nose contact with other cattle is possible.

Boundaries should be sufficient to prevent cattle breaking in or out and provide a gap of at least 3m (even if only on a temporary basis using an electric fence).

- Movement of personnel (including the farmer) without adequate attention to hygiene. Only essential visitors should contact cattle, and all personnel, including the farmer, should use farm-specific boots and clothing or take steps to ensure that adequate disinfection procedures are followed.
- Movement or sharing of large or small items of equipment should be avoided.. Otherwise adequate disinfection should be in place.

For further advice on biosecurity, talk to your vet or [click here](#).

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