




BVD ERADICATION KEY MESSAGES 2023



BVD ERADICATION PROGRAMME

The Irish BVDV eradication programme has made significant progress in reducing the prevalence of virus positive animals. Currently:

-  **95.8% of breeding herds and 97.2% of all herds have Negative Herd Status (NHS).**
-  **99.6% of bovine animals have a negative BVD status, with remainder mostly untested.**
-  **The number of BVD suspect animals alive at the end of 2022 is historically low, with those having been found in only 12 out of 83,000 breeding herds.**

The new Animal Health Law (AHL) sets out the requirements for recognition of BVD programmes and BVD-freedom at EU level for the first time. An application for recognition of the Irish BVD programme was submitted in 2022 and the programme was officially approved on the 18th July 2022. This approval is a key milestone for the programme and a prerequisite for applying for recognition for freedom.

Outlined below are key programme messages for 2023, including measures to further accelerate progress towards freedom, with a focus on prompt testing of calves and removal of suspects, prevention of onward transmission of infection from positive herds and testing of animals of unknown status, including those born before the 1st January 2013, to maximise the proportion of herds with NHS.

KEY MESSAGES FOR ALL HERDS

In support of these goals, the focus remains on the prompt testing of calves and increasing the proportion of herds with Negative Herd Status (NHS) by testing of animals of unknown status, including those born before the 1st January 2013 and preventing introduction of infection.

- ▶ Tissue tag testing remains compulsory for 2023.
- ▶ The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will provide financial support toward the cost of tagging of €2 per calf, paid directly to farmers based on calves registered, up to a maximum of 25 calves per herd.
- ▶ Tissue tag-test all calves as soon as possible after birth. Where positive or inconclusive tissue tag results are obtained, remove these calves promptly to obtain the higher financial support from DAFM. Confirmatory testing of these animals is no longer permitted.
- ▶ Test animals of unknown status to obtain NHS. At the end of 2022, around 3% of breeding herds contained small numbers of animals without either a valid test result or the registered birth of a negative calf. The presence of these animals prevents herds attaining NHS, accessing lower cost testing and most importantly contributing to the national target of at least 99.8% of herds having NHS. It is a legal requirement to test all animals of unknown status, including those born before 2013.
- ▶ New infections are often associated with transmission from other herds in the vicinity or introduction of pregnant dams. Review biosecurity to minimize this risk, with a focus on movement of animals (including pregnant dams), people (including the farmer) or equipment or contact across farm boundaries.

KEY MESSAGES FOR HERDS WITH POSITIVE OR INCONCLUSIVE RESULTS

- ▶ Immediate herd restriction and neighbour notification. DAFM will restrict movements both in and out. Neighbouring herds will immediately receive a biosecurity notification informing them of their increased risk, and on a monthly basis thereafter in the absence of removal of animal(s) with positive or inconclusive results. While restricted, movements out of the herd to slaughter or non-breeding herds only may be granted on a case-by-case basis under permit by the relevant Regional Veterinary Office (RVO), provided that the animals move directly to their destination
- ▶ Isolate and remove all animals with an initial positive or inconclusive test ear notch result; re-testing is no longer permitted. Remove these promptly to obtain the higher financial support from DAFM.

BEEF HERDS

€220 for beef breed animals removed with a registered date of death on AIM within 10 days of the initial test, reducing to €30 if removed between 11 and 21 days after the initial test.

DAIRY HERDS

Dairy heifers and dairy cross animals: €160 if removed within 10 days of the initial test, reducing to €30 if removed between 11 and 21 days after the initial test.

€30 for removal of bull calves within 14 days of the initial test.

- ▶ Cleaning and disinfection of buildings and handling facilities which may have been contaminated, as soon as practicable but in advance of the next breeding season.
- ▶ Conditions for lifting of restrictions. This requires completion of each of the following three measures by a nominated trained private veterinary practitioner (PVP), beginning at least 3 weeks after removal of the animal(s) with positive or inconclusive results, and fully funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine.
 - » Whole herd test. Blood sampling and testing of all animals in the herd.
 - » Epidemiological Investigation. Conducted under the Targeted Advisory Service on Animal Health (TASAH) under the Rural Development Programme.
 - » Vaccination of all female animals aged 12 months old and above by the nominated PVP.
- ▶ Continued herd measures. Following lifting of restrictions, herds are required to:
 - » Continue to tissue tag test for a minimum of 24 months after the removal of the last animal with positive or inconclusive results.
 - » Continue the vaccination programme in the herd in the following year, with this again delivered by the veterinary practitioner and funded by DAFM.
 - » Not sell any potential trojan female i.e. that was in calf at the time of birth of the animals with positive or inconclusive results until its calf has been born and tested for BVD.

KEY MESSAGES FOR HERDS THAT HAD POSITIVE OR INCONCLUSIVE RESULTS IN 2022

Herds that had a positive or inconclusive result in 2022 are required to undertake a second round of DAFM-funded vaccination in 2023 of all female animals aged 12 months old and above. All eligible animals are to be vaccinated before the start of the next breeding season and this may be earlier than 12 months since the last vaccination round to give sufficient time for all breeding cattle, including heifers, to complete a primary course of vaccination prior to service. Reminders will be sent to the herdowners and their nominated veterinary practitioner.

NATIONAL BVD ERADICATION PROGRAMME

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