

# ahi

JANUARY | 2025

## MONTHLY NEWS

AHIMONBULL 29.01.2025



**NATIONAL MASTITIS CONTROL PROGRAMME  
GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START!**



**IRISH JOHNE'S CONTROL PROGRAMME  
USE YOUR LAST VRAMP  
TO HELP WITH CALVING  
TIME PREPARATIONS**



**[www.AnimalHealthIreland.ie](http://www.AnimalHealthIreland.ie)**

*To contribute to an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable farming and agri-food sector through improved animal health and welfare.*



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Animal Health Ireland (AHI) is a private-public partnership established between private agri-sector stakeholders and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM).

AHI aims to provide the knowledge, education and coordination required to establish effective control programmes for important diseases of livestock that are not subject to international regulation and in so doing to contribute to an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable farming and agrifood sector through improved animal health and welfare.

AHI gratefully acknowledges the financial and other contributions of our stakeholders



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# GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START

Michelle McGrath, CellCheck Assistant Programme Manager

**H**opefully the year has gotten off to a good start for you, after the challenging cold spell at least. It is great to see the early signs of Spring peeping through as well as a bit more daylight.

I am not one for New Year's resolutions, but the new year is a good time to take stock of how the previous year went and ideally how I would like the new year to go. Here are some suggestions which might help your farm year run more smoothly and efficiently:

1. Review records from last year, to assess how the year went and identify any opportunities where improvements could be made, be it financial records, milk records or animal health records and if it is that your records are a bit scarce or disorganised, for the new year, put a system in place which will allow you to record information more easily.
2. Make a plan and break it up into short, medium and long term tasks. Making a herd health plan with your vet if you haven't done so already should be a priority. Most of you are probably doing this already and maybe it's a case of fine tuning the plan. It should include planning for the calving season, having protocols in place for colostrum feeding, having a refresher on calf rearing practices, how to manage sick calves, sick cows etc. and do it for each month so it will make it easier to see what needs to be done in advance. If you are planning on investing in farm buildings, maybe a new calf shed or some more cubicles, now is a good time to plan for this too.
3. Milk recording- the number of farmers milk recording has increased over the last few years which is great to see. Booking an early milk recording, within 60 days of calving, is so important to see how your dry period has gone and to identify any new infections early in lactation.
4. Have you serviced your milking machine recently or do your liners need to be changed? If they haven't been used in a while or if they have done more than 2000 milkings since they were last changed, they will need to be and make a note in your diary of when they need to be changed next.
5. Begin to gather information on what sires are available for the breeding season. The sires you select have a huge effect on the future of your herd and sire catalogues take a while to work through. Get advice from your breeding advisor on how to interpret all the information available.

**Finally, don't forget to plan some time off. It helps to have a break booked, to have it to look forward to, especially as we approach the busy time.**

# USE YOUR LAST VRAMP TO HELP WITH CALVING TIME PREPARATIONS

Liam Doyle, Johne's disease Programme Manager

**C**alves are the most susceptible animals on your farm to Johne's Disease (JD) infection, and the major infection source for them is the dung from infected cows. This means that calving time is when you can have most impact on protecting the health and preventing the spread of JD into the next generation of cattle on your farm. If you are a member of the Irish Johnes Control Programme (IJCP) then it's a good time to look back at your last completed VRAMP (veterinary risk assessment and management plan). The VRAMP contains tailored veterinary advice for your farm, focused on priority areas, with the aim to reduce within-farm disease transmission. The VRAMP should be looked upon as the guidance you must put in place on your farm to try and break the cycle of JD infection. To access your last VRAMP go to your JD home page on ICBF (Figure 1) and click on the date value opposite "Date of last VRAMP" to take you to the document. [Accessing the AHI dashboards.](#)

## Current Johnes Herd Status

Select Year: 2025 ▾

### Herd Details

Herd Number:	C0000001
Owner Name:	A. Farmer
Address:	Address
Mobile:	A. 353 8X 1234567
Date of most recent enrolment in the IJCP	02-SEP-24
Date of initial enrolment in the IJCP	01-JAN-24
Date of last positive faecal culture or PCR	
Whole herd test completed?	Not Yet Started
Ancillary PCR testing required?	No
ELISA re-testing recommended?	No
Date of last VRAMP	<a href="#">26-SEP-24</a>
VRAMP for 2025	Not Required

To see your last VRAMP go to your JD Homepage and opposite 'Date of last VRAMP' click on the 'Date' value

Remember also that it is not just IJCP herds which should be putting in place measures to combat JD. All farms have some chance of having JD infection, although a continuous year on year history of negative herd tests builds confidence of its absence. As an added benefit the hygiene measures put in place to combat JD transmission to calves will also reduce transmission of other diseases, which in turn improves both calf and cow health enhancing overall productivity and welfare levels.

The following are some suggestions for things that all herds can do to protect your calves and try to break the transmission cycle which infects them with JD. Look at the suggestions and determine which are the most practical for you and try to implement as many of them as possible over time, building them into your normal working routine:

1. Identify high-risk cows using test results, in collaboration with your veterinary practitioner. As effectively as possible given your farm circumstances separate high-risk cows from the main herd for calving, so that calves from low-risk cows are not exposed to dung from high-risk cows.
2. Clean cows of dung before they enter calving pens.
3. Keep calving pens clean and dry. Remove dung and replace soiled bedding regularly.
4. Do not use calf pens to hold sick adult cattle.
5. Separate calves as soon after birth as possible, into a clean nesting area.
6. Prevent manure from the calving pen and other adult facilities from getting into the calf pens; clean or use separate boots, wash hands, change soiled clothes when you enter the calf pens, or have someone dedicated to looking after the calves.
7. Select replacement calves from low-risk cows; do not keep replacement heifer calves from high-risk cows (particularly their most recent calves).
8. Collect and prepare milk and colostrum hygienically, avoiding faecal contamination.
9. Ensure that calves receive colostrum – remember the Colostrum 1, 2, 3 rule: The 1st MILK, and only the first milk the cow produces, should be used to feed to the newborn calf for its first feed; Feed calves within 2 HOURS of birth as antibody absorption is highest at this time; Feed 3 LITRES to ensure the calf receives enough antibodies.
10. Provide colostrum and milk, especially to calves intended to be retained as replacements or sold for breeding, from low-risk sources (individual test-negative, low-risk cows, or their own dam); preferably not from pooled colostrum or milk (even pooled from low-risk cows), and definitely not from high-risk cows.
11. If possible, house calves to be retained as replacements separate from calves from high-risk cows.

**For further information on the AHI website about how to help control JD in your herd check out the following link which will take you to the relevant fact sheets and documents related to JD.**  
**[Click here for AHI Johnes Resource Documents](#)**





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