



Animal Health & Welfare NI

## BVD Eradication Programme

[www.bvdni.com](http://www.bvdni.com)

### **BVD PI Removal Scheme ends – how to deal with BVD Persistently Infected (PI) animals**

The BVD PI Removal Incentivisation scheme, which was a one-off scheme due to limited EU funding, ends on 30<sup>th</sup> September, however the need to dispose of animals infected with the BVD virus remains crucial. The elimination of highly infectious BVD PI animals is critical to the eradication of BVD in NI.

Any herd owner who notifies the death of a PI animal on APHIS on or before 30<sup>th</sup> September may avail of the scheme, provided that the criteria are met including that disposal has been carried out within the required timeframes (not later than 4 weeks from the date of the initial test positive notification or not later than 6 weeks from the initial test notification where a retest has been undertaken).

Veterinary advice is to isolate and dispose of all PI calves as soon as possible after notification of a positive BVD result. If a decision is made to retest the animal (using a blood sample collected by your veterinary surgeon), this testing should be carried out at least 3 weeks after the initial ear tag test sample was taken. Almost 90% of all calves that had positive test results initially have tested positive again on this confirmatory testing.

While PI calves may appear healthy at birth, they represent a highly significant risk of infection to other animals in your and your neighbours' herds. The majority of PI cattle become poor doers, gradually deteriorate and do not survive to reach slaughter weight. PI cattle are highly infectious to other cattle, with the virus being present in all body fluids, including dung. Isolation is not a realistic long term option, as it is extremely difficult to avoid the transfer of the disease on equipment or clothing.

The mothers of all PI calves should also be blood sampled and tested for BVD. If the dam tests positive, then all of her offspring are likely to be positive and should be treated as PIs until tested.

Ultimately, it is in your interests to improve and protect the health of animals in your herd. Getting rid of the BVD virus from your farm can bring about significant animal health and financial benefits. Check out the AHWNI website for more information [www.animalhealthni.com](http://www.animalhealthni.com).