

Latest BVD maps illustrate areas of concern

Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) maps showing the general location of infected cattle at the start of June 2021 illustrate that, while BVD outbreaks are present across all counties, there are areas where the presence of greater numbers of BVD Positive cattle could mean that herds in those areas are at a higher risk of acquiring the virus from a neighbouring herd.

The number of BVD Positives alive on NI farms has risen by over 50% since January 2021, while the retention rate of Positives has fallen by approximately 20% (at five weeks following disclosure of the initial positive result).

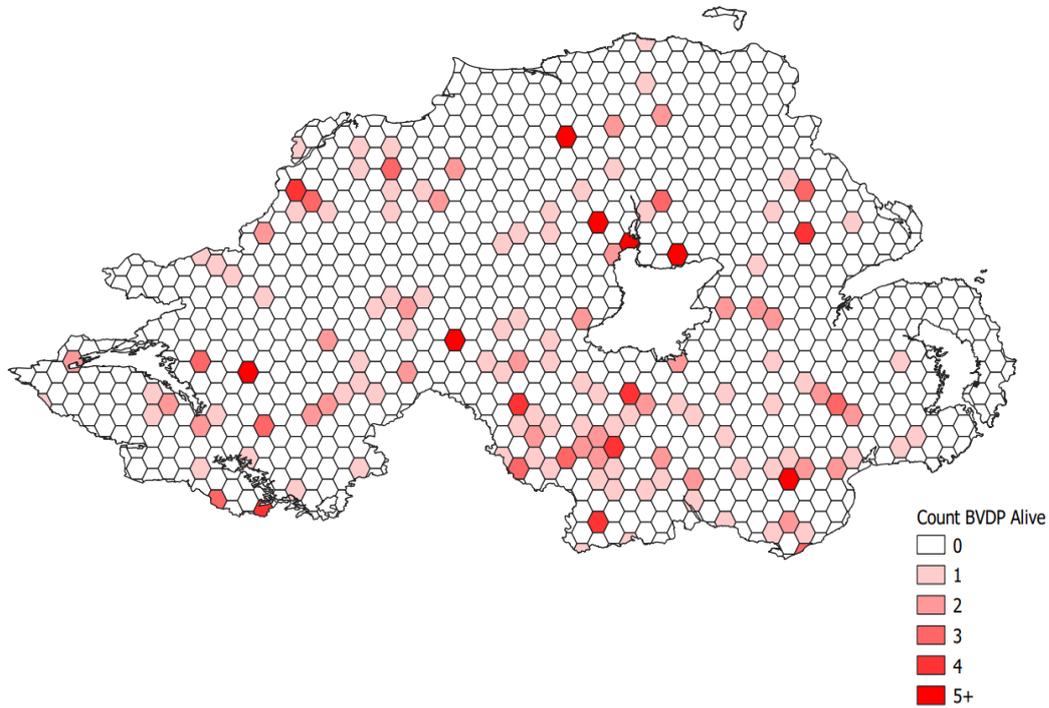
Recent statistics also show that Counties Armagh and Fermanagh have been particularly badly affected. Between 01/07/2020 and 30/06/2021, Armagh DVO had the highest level of initial positive or inconclusive results, seen in 0.57% animals tested, with the next highest being Enniskillen DVO at 0.44%, compared to the NI average of 0.33%.

Map 1 displays the distribution of living BVD Positives at 1st June 2021 and Map 2 identifies general locations where BVD Positive cattle have been retained for more than 5 weeks since the disclosure of the results. In some areas, the higher densities of BVD Positives are because some farms have had multiple Positives disclosed on testing.

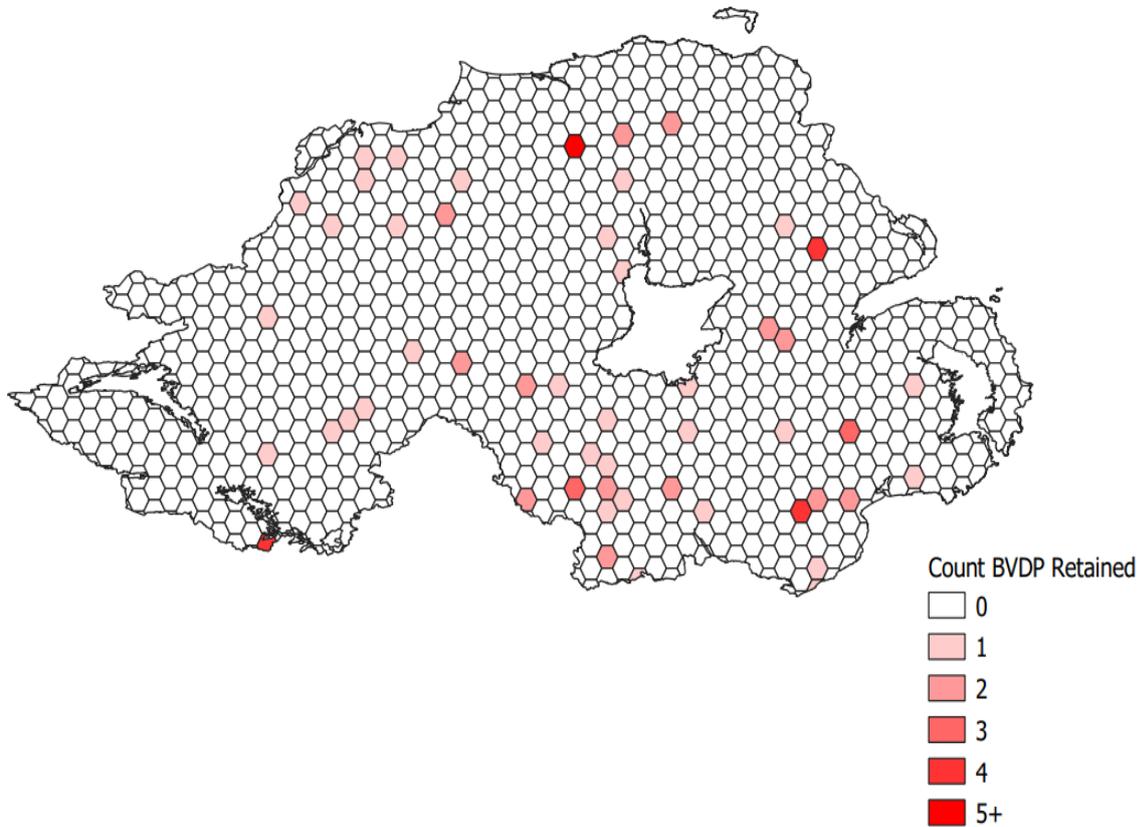
Farmers are encouraged to tag calves promptly after birth and submit samples quickly so that identification of non-negative calves can occur at the earliest possible opportunity. A key aim of the BVD Programme is to drive down the length of time for which BVD Positive animals are kept on farm, as it is recognised that delays in removing Positives lead to not only a greater chance of the same farm having more Positives during the following season, but also a greater chance of neighbouring herds becoming infected. Veterinary advice is to dispose of Persistently Infected cattle as soon as possible, so that BVD can be eliminated from the NI cattle population.

The BVD Implementation Group has been asking DAERA to bring in new legislation that would allow information on BVD breakdowns to be shared with at-risk herd keepers, to encourage the application of targeted biosecurity measures that will help to reduce the risk of the BVD virus entering their herds.

Map 1: Map showing distribution of BVD Positive cattle still alive at 1st June 2021



Map 2: Map showing distribution of retained BVD Positive cattle at 1st June 2021



Note for editors:

1. For any queries, please contact AHWNI at info@animalhealthni.com / 028 7963 9333.