

Check the BVD status of directly purchased animals

When purchasing cattle directly from other farms, farmers are reminded to check the BVD status of all cattle **before** buying them and moving them to their premises.

Given that farm to farm movements are notified to DAERA retrospectively, checks on BVD statuses are only carried out after these animal movements are logged on to APHIS. At that stage, if a restricted animal has moved on to the buyer's premises, it may be presenting a significant risk to the health of livestock in the herd.

Financial impact

If an animal's BVD status is unknown, the animal is restricted until a negative test result is available and it will be the responsibility of the purchasing herd owner to get a test carried out. Similarly, if an animal has an unresolved non-negative status (for example, an inconclusive result, or 'Dam of a PI' status), the onus is on the new owner to arrange for a test to be carried out to potentially allow the animal to move.

Disease impact

Of greater importance is the threat posed by an animal that turns out to be positive. Not only will BVD positive animals (if born after 01/03/2016) not be accepted by abattoirs, but Persistently Infected (PI) cattle shed high levels of virus for life and are the main source of infection for other cattle in the herd of residence and in neighbouring herds. It is recommended that PIs are culled as quickly as possible after being identified.

Use of BVD statuses on APHIS

The presence of BVD status information on APHIS has multiple benefits: it allows herd owners to check the BVD status of all cattle in their herds and identify cattle that need to be tested; the information can be used by farmers to demonstrate to potential buyers that the animals of interest have a BVD Negative status (BVDN); and it allows automatic checks to be carried out before animals can enter markets.

Quarantine procedures

A straightforward check of the BVD status of animals on APHIS or the AHWNI database can reduce the risk of an infectious disease coming on to a farm. Bought in animals are the highest risk category of any animals added to a herd and they should always be quarantined initially for a period of at least 4 weeks, to reduce the disease risks. Quarantined animals must be in complete isolation from the rest of the herd and should not share the same airspace. The home herd should not have contact with biological waste (slurry, used bedding, etc) from the quarantined animals. Separate equipment and outer clothing for staff should be used in the quarantine area.

Buyer beware

Remember that the BVD Eradication scheme is a 'buyer beware' scheme: herd owners are responsible for all animal movements into and out of their herds. It is up to the seller and the buyer to be aware of disease status information. Sellers can print a certificate of BVD negative test results from the AHWNI database.