

VOLUNTARY PROGRAMME

What were the main findings from the voluntary phase of the programme?

In the voluntary phase approximately 400,000 tags were ordered for use in 4,700 herds. In total almost 608,000 animals were assigned either a direct or an indirect infection status. Initial test results showed 0.51% positive, 0.01% inconclusive and 98.57% negative. 19% of herds had one or more animals with a positive or inconclusive result. 90% of calves that had an initial positive result and were subject to re-test were found positive again and were considered to have been PI, while the remaining 10% were considered to have been transiently infected.

Will my participation in the voluntary programme count within the Compulsory programme?

The Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Eradication Scheme Order (NI) 2016 will require all herdowners to 'Tag and Test' all calves born on or after 1st March 2016. This will include those herds that have been testing within the voluntary phase of the BVD programme. For those herds that have successfully controlled infection during the voluntary phase, the purpose of ongoing testing is to ensure that infection is not introduced into the herd and that PI animals are not inadvertently sold onwards. AHWNI is currently seeking ways to recognise herds that have been testing for three or more years, complied fully with the voluntary programme and have a high probability of being uninfected.

How many herds had a high prevalence of positive results during the voluntary phase?

19% of participating herds had one or more animal with a positive or inconclusive result. Of these, less than 5% had 5 or more such results. 9 PI calves was the highest number identified within a single herd during the voluntary programme.