3. Does my herd management allow rapid spread of Johne’s disease?

MPS scores from infected calves and affected animals to dogs, chickens, cats and to the seafood chain. All management practices must be implemented to reduce the rate of spread.

See the management practices listed that are likely to increase spread of Johne’s disease on your farm. Remember that this is a cost valuation, and should not be used in isolation. Combined management practices will enable you to better measure the cost of Johne’s disease. By using our online tool you can help you.

A farm risk assessment will help you determine the likelihood that Johne’s disease is present in your herd.

The limitations of the Johne’s disease testing

There are three main areas to consider when testing for Johne’s disease:

1. Reduce the risk of introducing Johne’s disease with purchased stock.
2. Do your herd management practices allow rapid spread of Johne’s disease?
3. Does your herd management allow rapid spread of Johne’s disease?

False negative results are common, and repeated negative tests of individual animals

How do I stop Johne’s disease coming into my farm?

If your herd is in a herd free state, then some options may be considered. For example, if no infected animals were apparent at test time, or the majority of the herd was already vaccinated, then a single test may be conducted to confirm this. If this is not the case, then a more comprehensive program of testing may be required.

A Guide to Johne’s Disease for Northern Ireland farmers and vets

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How do I stop Johne’s disease coming into my farm?

To stop Johne’s disease coming into your farm, reducing the risk from purchased stock should be the priority. The only way to prevent this risk is to start with a new stock.

Reducing the risk of introducing Johne’s disease with purchased stock is very difficult because:

1. Johne’s disease is a long term process and the disease is often undetected in infected stock.
2. Johne’s disease is a chronic condition and you cannot test animal herds that have only been affected for several months or years.
3. There are few known disease free herds which can be tested.

Some Johne’s disease tests are very sensitive to infection, and some are not. This means that when testing a herd, all the tests used must be able to detect Johne’s disease in your herd.

Start controlling Johne’s disease on your farm

If your herd is in a herd free state then some control measures should be adopted. Treated of infected Johne’s disease in a herd requires a long term commitment in addition to control measures. The following can be considered:

1. Infected animals will rarely test positive until they have been infected for several years. Young breeding animals that test negative

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Johne’s disease – The Facts

Intestinal Bacterial Infection

• A bacterial infection of the intestine
• The source of the bacteria is Mycobacterium avium subsp paratuberculosis, which is seen commonly referred to as MAP
• MAP infects the intestines and then is shed in the faeces of infected cattle

Symptoms of Johne’s disease

• The disease tends to be seen in older animals but young animals can also become infected. 
• The disease is not generally fatal
• The disease can affect all breeds of cattle

The Economic Impact of Johne’s disease

• Johne’s disease can significantly reduce the economic performance of infected animals
• The disease can affect the future productivity of infected animals

Incidence of Johne’s disease

• Johne’s disease is a disease which has been reported in many countries around the world
• The disease is not endemic in the UK
• However, in recent years, Johne’s disease has been reported in some parts of the UK

Transmission of Johne’s disease

• Johne’s disease is spread from infected animals
• Johne’s disease is spread from infected animals
• Johne’s disease is spread from infected animals

Why you should think about Johne’s disease

• Johne’s disease is not generally fatal
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What should I do about Johne’s disease

If you are worried about the presence or extent of Johne’s disease in your herd, you can assess the risk to your stock by following the three questions:

1. Am I likely to have Johne’s disease in my herd?
2. If my herd is infected, how likely is it to spread to my stock?
3. If my herd is infected, what can I do to control it?

A farm risk assessment

Understanding both the infection status of your herd and the spread risk to your stock will determine the strategy for reducing the risk of infection and the spread of infection in your herd.

Testing stocks

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Infectious Animal

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Affected Animal

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Management practices that can increase unspread

Lower Risk

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1. Spread between herds by an infected Animal

The increased risk of Johne’s disease in a herd depends on how many infected animals are infected. If a herd has a very low prevalence it is possible for the herd to become infected. The herd risk depends on the number of infected animals.

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