

# BVD RISK AREAS WARNING - AHWNI

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Recent BVD test results have revealed that some areas are disclosing higher numbers of BVD Positives, including in the Beragh-Carrickmore area, in south Fermanagh and south of Armagh. Dairy herds in particular have been affected. Animal Health and Welfare NI (AHWNI) is encouraging farmers to be aware and to take action this grazing season to prevent livestock contacts at boundaries with neighbouring cattle. This could involve putting either electric or double fencing in place, or by managing grazing alternately in conjunction with neighbouring farmers so as to reduce the risk of virus transmission.

The rolling 12-month animal level incidence of BVD for the Programme was 0.22% at the end of January 2025, however the incidence of BVD at the animal level so far this year in the Armagh DVO area has been over twice the NI average.

For the first time in the history of the Programme, at the start of April no BVD Positive cattle have been retained for more than 28 days. There are marked benefits to be gained by the increasingly prompt removal of BVD Positive calves. This marks a dramatic shift from previous patterns of retention and will yield dividends going forward. The profile of calf registrations in NI has its major peak, with over 50,000 registrations per month, from March to May and a smaller rise is seen from September to November. The current spring calving season means that the next period of heightened susceptibility for infection of foetuses is likely to be from early to mid-summer, so it is critical that efforts are made by herd owners now to reduce virus transmission across boundaries.

From 1<sup>st</sup> May, herd restrictions will be applied if any BVD Positive or Inconclusive cattle are retained for 7 days and will remain in place until three weeks have elapsed after the last Positive or Inconclusive animal has been culled and all cattle in the herd over 30 days of age have a BVD Negative test result. Farmers who are notified of BVD Positive or Inconclusive results and decide to cull the animals immediately are advised to notify the deaths to DAERA promptly.

Note for editors:

1. AHWNI is responsible for the delivery of the Northern Ireland Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Eradication Scheme. For more information on the operation of the Scheme, please contact AHWNI (email [info@animalhealthni.com](mailto:info@animalhealthni.com), tel. 028 7963 9333) or visit the AHWNI website [www.animalhealthni.com](http://www.animalhealthni.com).

2. AHWNI is issuing BVD Alert SMS messages to farmers in significantly affected postcode areas