

Press Release

10 December 2025

Joint cross border BVD awareness campaign starts

Animal Health and Welfare NI (AHWNI) and Animal Health Ireland (AHI) have officially launched a new proactive campaign to address increased BVD prevalence in counties on both sides of the border.

In Northern Ireland, concerning and higher levels of the disease have been seen in hotspot areas in Counties Armagh, Tyrone and Fermanagh, and in Ireland the most affected area at present is County Monaghan.

BVD is a highly contagious disease that weakens animals' immune systems, causing reproductive losses and long-term herd health problems that can quickly spread. It can also be hugely costly to farmers.

To increase awareness, and encourage farmers to do all they can to protect their herds from infection with the BVD virus, there are three main strands of advice being given:

Keep It Out – select new stock carefully, isolate and discuss with your vet whether you should be vaccinating the herd

Stamp It Out – cull positives quickly, clean and disinfect, and keep protective clothing and equipment hygiene expectations high when visitors are coming on to your farm

Fence It Out – manage your boundaries well to avoid contact with neighbouring cattle – plan to get maintenance work done when the weather permits.

Herd restrictions on both sides of the border are helping to contain the virus by limiting the movement of animals out of breakdown herds, however further actions are needed to accelerate progress toward eradication.

Posters and information are being distributed to livestock markets, and veterinary practitioners, and farmers are welcome to contact the AHWNI and AHI helpdesks to discuss their BVD situation. The two organisations will also run farmer information sessions in the areas in early 2026 to help support farmers in limiting the spread of BVD.

AHI and AHWNI are committed to fostering in partnership a strategic approach to animal health and welfare in both jurisdictions, based on solid veterinary and scientific evidence.

Both organisations continue to provide strategic supports to livestock producers and processors by providing the knowledge, education and coordination required to establish effective control programmes for non-regulated diseases of livestock.

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, tel. 028 7963 9333) or visit the AHWNI website

www.animalhealthni.com

2. AHI is responsible for the delivery of the Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Eradication Scheme in Ireland. For more information on the operation of the Scheme, please contact AHI (email ahi@animalhealthireland.ie tel. 00353 (0) 719671928 or visit the AHI website www.animalhealthireland.ie).