

# What impact will new BVD restrictions have on your herd?



The current rollout of broader Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) restrictions has implications for all local cattle enterprises, according to Animal Health and Welfare NI (AHWNI). For those herds that are free from BVD infection, the new herd level restrictions and individual restrictions on breeding females categorised as being a risk provide a greater level of assurance that cattle being moved between farms and markets are free from persistent and transient infection with BVD.

For herds where the BVD virus is present, the measures will lead to restrictions on inward and outward movement of cattle, as well as longer term individual restrictions on breeding females. The purpose of these changes is to control the spread of the virus by minimising the movement of infectious animals or pregnant stock potentially carrying persistently infected calves. It is crucial that herd owners act now to both stamp it out and keep it out.

The incidence of BVD has remained static over the last two years and while some parts of NI have low levels of infection, BVD test results in recent months have shown some areas where the infection is more focussed. These areas include parts of Co Tyrone (Omagh, Dromore and Fintona), Co Fermanagh (Irvinestown, Tempo, Lisnaskea, Newtownbutler and Derrylin) and Co Armagh (Richhill and Loughgall). Text messages have been sent by AHWNI to farmers in these areas for their information and to heighten awareness.

In a substantial number of this year's cases of BVD, the virus was present in the herd last year, during the time when the dam of a current Positive calf was particularly susceptible to the infection (between the first and fourth month of pregnancy), indicating that there has been a temporal spillover of infection from one breeding season to the next. These cases highlight the need to act promptly to protect herds where the virus is present or a known risk, as a second season of BVD in a herd can result in a more extensive and financially damaging outbreak.

BVD Positive cattle shed huge amounts of virus and are a significant risk to other cattle on their holding as well as to cattle on neighbouring premises, therefore their prompt identification and removal is key to control. Thorough cleaning and disinfection of areas that could be contaminated with the virus is an important measure that will help to wipe out BVD on an affected farm.

So, what impact will the new BVD restrictions have on your herd? Their introduction aims to help all NI herds by accelerating progress to eradication. Your actions now to protect your herd can determine how quickly you will benefit from them.

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 the significantly affected postcode areas.