

First-ever major BVD cross-border public meeting

A major public meeting will take place on Tuesday 26th May 2026 in the Tommy Makem Centre, The Cow Fair, Keady, Co Armagh at 8.00pm to which all interested stakeholders are invited, for an update on the current situation from vets working on the disease, and to have the opportunity to ask questions and join in the discussion on how to address the current issues. The meeting is being hosted by Animal Health and Welfare NI (AHWNI) and Animal Health Ireland (AHI) who co-ordinate the respective BVD Programmes.

Recently released maps displaying the all-island incidence of BVD during 2025 illustrate the areas of higher incidence, primarily counties Armagh and Fermanagh in NI and have sparked this initiative by AHWNI and AHI to engage with affected communities on both sides of the border and explore how BVD is being tackled in both jurisdictions.

Huge strides have been made in controlling and eradicating the disease, which remains a major threat to farms. As there is a strong desire to achieve all-island freedom from BVD, a ramping up of a collective effort is required to ensure that the disease is brought under control as quickly as possible.

Compared to the all-island BVD maps for 2024, some changes are evident, including a decrease in incidence in mid-Tyrone, hotter spots in border areas of Fermanagh and a diffusion of infection locations in Co Armagh. There are particular risks along the border of Co Monaghan with NI, so it is important that farmers take steps to protect their herds in these areas in particular.

In NI, the animal level incidence has remained static for over two years, however it is anticipated that the immediate application of herd restrictions, which commenced on 1st February 2026, on herds where BVD is detected will reduce the transmission of the virus within affected farms and to neighbouring farms.

AHWNI chief executive Dr Sam Strain commented, "Farmers and industry partners have made substantial efforts to drive down the incidence of the BVD virus by complying with NI legislation and taking steps to protect their herds, however the persistence of the disease in hotspot areas is giving concern and we are very aware that this disease does not respect borders. An important part of our strategy is to work in collaboration with colleagues in AHI to drive down the incidence of BVD."

BVD Programme manager at AHWNI, Sharon Verner stated, "AHWNI continues to engage with all herd owners whose herds are in breakdown situations, to advise on how the virus can be eradicated at the farm level. As we work with industry and government to make new tools available to deal with BVD, we encourage all farmers to act now to protect their herds, through identifying and acting on risks when purchasing and at boundaries. We welcome this opportunity to speak in person to farmers in the worst affected areas, as we are determined to work together to stamp out the BVD virus."

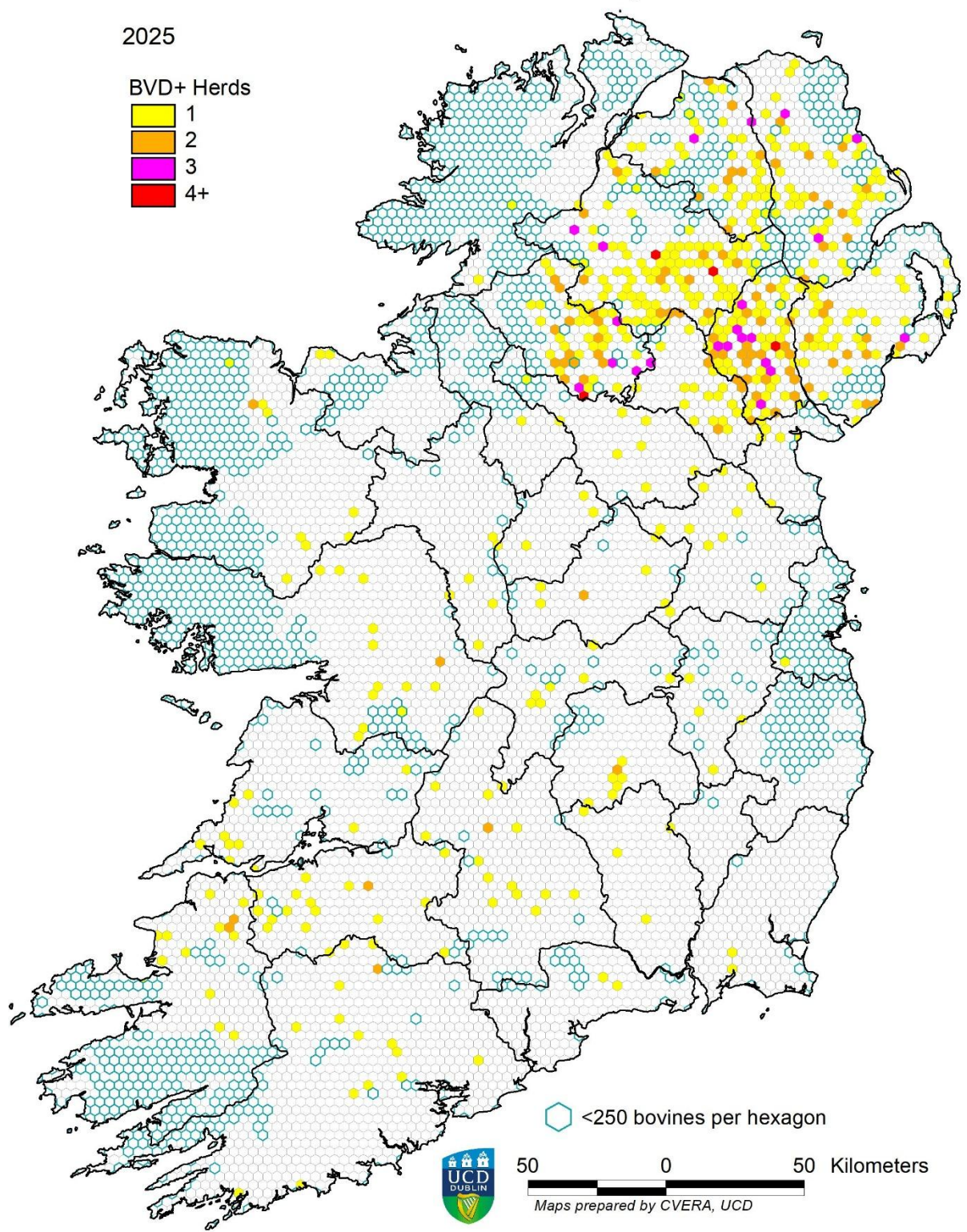


Figure 1: Map showing distribution of herds with BVD Positive calves from 01/01/2025 to 31/12/2025.

Notes for editors

1. The maps are based on anonymised data and fixed sized hexagonal units and show the number of herds with positive results, allowing local patterns to be seen. Each hexagon represents 10 km², with a radius of less than 2km.
2. The maps were produced by the Centre for Veterinary Epidemiology and Risk Analysis (CVERA), University College Dublin, and provide a useful update on the progress that has been made.
3. Updated figures for both programmes are published regularly at <https://animalhealthni.com/health-programmes/programme-results/> and <https://animalhealthireland.ie/programmes/bvd/programme-results/>, with a series of monthly maps for ROI only available at <https://animalhealthireland.ie/programmes/bvd/bvd-maps/> and
4. For further information, please contact AHWNI info@animalhealthni.com