

CHeCS Johne's Programme

The CHeCS Johne's programme has changed to a graded system (see table) which is designed to enable herds to maintain or move towards clear herd tests. This is achieved through a combination of testing and the implementation of a management programme. It is essential for herds within levels 1-4 to have a health plan in place covering the control of Johne's disease. The health plan must be updated annually and endorsed by both vet and farmer.

Status	Definition
Level 1:	This is directly equivalent to the previous CHeCS Accredited free status. Level 1 status is associated with the lowest risk source when buying in stock. Health plan required.
Level 2:	Herds with level 2 status have had one or two clear consecutive herd tests. Health plan required.
Level 3:	Herds with level 3 status have reactors identified at the annual herd test, but these are no more than 3% of the animals tested. Health plan required.
Level 4:	Herds with level 3 status have reactors identified at the annual herd test, and these amount to more than 3% of the animals tested. Health plan required.
Level 5:	Any herd that is not carrying out the required testing or does not have a suitable health plan in place automatically falls into this category. Level 5 status is considered to be the greatest risk source when buying in stock.

Essential elements of the CHeCS Johne's Programme:

1. Annual testing must be carried out in accordance with the CHeCS technical document.
2. Added animals other than from sources with Level 1 status must be tested prior to entering participating herds. Both blood and dung testing is required, regardless of age.
3. All seropositive animals must be separated from young calves, seronegative animals and animals intended for breeding until follow up testing is carried out.
4. Reactors (separated as above) must be removed from the herd as soon as is practical. Whilst they are retained, they must remain isolated and their dung must be kept away from other cattle. Any pasture used by reactors must not be grazed by other animals within the herd until at least 12 months has elapsed.
5. Any calf at foot of a reactor must not be retained or sold as a breeding animal.
6. A health plan must be in place for the farm, covering the control of Johne's disease, which is updated annually and signed off by both the farmer and the herd's veterinary surgeon. The health plan must cover both the essential elements and guidelines associated with the programme.

Guidelines for the CHeCS Johne's Programme:

1. Whilst Johne's disease can be transferred between adult animals, young calves are considered to be the most susceptible to infection. Herd specific instructions should be in place to reduce stock exposure to faecal contamination. This should be focussed on the calving period; the calving area and young calf accommodation should be kept as clean as possible.
2. Ideally there should be a gap of at least 12 months between spreading slurry/ manure on pasture and using it for grazing young calves.
3. Faecal contamination of feed and water sources should be reduced if possible.
4. It is advised that mains water is provided for grazing cattle where possible to reduce the potential for faecal contamination.
5. For the same reason, non-flowing natural water sources should be fenced off to prevent access.
6. Co-grazing with other ruminants is not recommended as they may act as a reservoir of infection.
7. The last 2 calves born to a reactor are considered to have a higher risk of being infected. It is advised that these are not retained for breeding or sold as breeding animals.

CHeCS Johne's Programme Health Plan Example

Mandatory Elements
1. Testing <i>(to include details of annual test and any added animals)</i>
2. Test positive animals <i>(to cover further testing & isolation, management of calves at foot)</i>

Further elements to be discussed in the health plan

1. Calf management (*measures to reduce exposure of young calves to faecal contamination*)

2. Slurry management (*slurry from cattle of a lower health status not to be used, slurry treatment of calf pasture to be avoided*)

3. Food & water supplies (*measures to reduce faecal contamination*)

4. Co-grazing (*to be avoided if possible, any cases/testing in sheep etc*)

5. Management of offspring from reactors (*last 2 calves born to reactors considered to be high risk*)

