



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Asiantaeth
Iechyd Anifeiliaid
a Phlanhigion

APHA Briefing Note 01/16

Classification of bovine TB breakdowns in Wales

Purpose

1. To inform Official Veterinarians (OVs) of TB breakdown herd classifications in Wales from 1 January 2016.
2. In order to freely move or trade cattle, herds need to be classified as Officially Tuberculosis Free (OTF).
3. TB Breakdowns in Wales will be classified as “Officially Tuberculosis Free Withdrawn” (OTFW) unless all of the following criteria apply:
 - The TB Breakdown has only one reactor which is not a traced animal, has no detected lesions at post mortem and has negative culture results.
 - The herd is not contiguous to another herd whose OTF status has been withdrawn in the last 6 months
 - The herd has not had its OTF status withdrawn in the previous 3 years
4. If all of the above criteria apply, a breakdown will be classified as “Officially Tuberculosis Free Suspended” and one further clear TB skin test is required before TB movement restrictions can be lifted.

Background

5. Restrictions

In Wales, OTF cattle herds are routinely tested at least once every year. This is a key part of our TB surveillance and is designed to provide confidence that herds are genuinely free of TB and able to trade cattle. When a herd containing an animal suspected of having TB is identified it is placed under movement restrictions and investigations are carried out to confirm or rule out the presence of TB. Until the outcome of these investigations are known:

- There is no movement into or out of the herd unless licensed by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA). Cattle can leave the herd to move straight to slaughter or to slaughter via an Approved Finishing Unit.
- No restocking is allowed until the cattle remaining have completed one or more TB test..
- Any suspect animals must be isolated from other cattle within the herd.

This reduces the risk of TB spreading within and between cattle herds. When a herd has been placed under movement restrictions more testing takes place until the test results indicate that the disease is no longer present.

6. **Statuses**

Cattle herds in Wales have a TB status of either:

- Officially TB Free (OTF)
- Officially TB Free Suspended (OTFS)
- Officially TB Free Withdrawn (OTFW).

7. **Officially TB Free**

Herds with a clear test history are described as OTF. These herds are free to trade cattle as long as they meet the testing requirements and are demonstrated to be free of disease.

Individual animals within an OTF herd can be restricted when a herd contains one or more animal that has given an inconclusive result to a skin test and the herd has not been classified as OTFW in the previous three years. In these circumstances, the inconclusive animal(s) will be restricted to the premises, kept isolated from other cattle and tested again whilst the rest of the herd keeps its OTF status.

8. **Officially TB Free Suspended**

The OTF status of a herd is suspended when there is a suspicion of TB infection within that herd. The status of a herd will be suspended when:

- a skin test discloses one reactor and it is not classed as a traced animal, has no detected lesions at the post mortem and has negative culture results
- the herd is not contiguous to another herd whose OTF status has been withdrawn in the last six months
- the herd has not had its OTF status withdrawn in the previous three years
- a herd contains no reactors but one or more animal has given an inconclusive result to a skin test and the herd has been classified as OTFW in the previous three years
- a herd has one or more animal that is identified as having lesions typical of TB through routine post mortem examination in a slaughterhouse
- a herd has one or more animal that is showing clinical signs of being infected with TB

- the status of the herd is unknown due to a skin test becoming overdue
- any combination of the above circumstances.

Herds with OTFS status need to have at least one clear herd TB test before movement restrictions are lifted and to regain its OTF status.

9. Officially TB Free Withdrawn

The OTF status of a herd is withdrawn when evidence suggests that infection is present. The status of a herd will be withdrawn when more than one reactor is found at a TB test or only one reactor is found at a TB test and:

- lesions that are typical of TB are identified at the post-mortem inspection
- a laboratory test has demonstrated the presence of Mycobacterium bovis (bovine TB)
- the herd has been classified as OTFW in the previous three years
- the herd is next to another herd which has been classified as OTFW in the previous six months
- a disease risk to that herd has been identified by the APHA
- any combination of the above circumstances.

When a herd is classified as OTFW, follow up testing takes place until we are satisfied that the disease is no longer present. Herds with an OTFW status require two clear consecutive TB tests at a minimum interval of 60 days in order to regain OTF status and for movement restrictions to be lifted.

For further information

- TB Eradication Programme in Wales:
<http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/bovinetuberculosis/bovinetberadication/?lang=en>
- Herd TB statuses:
<http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/bovinetuberculosis/cattlecontrols/statuses-and-restrictions/?lang=en>
- OV Instructions:
http://ahvla.defra.gov.uk/External_OV_Instructions/TB_Instructions/Updates/index.htm

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