



## **APHA Briefing Note 06/16 (updated)** **Tighter TB control measures in England from April**

**Updated on 11 April to include more detailed instructions for OVs**

### **Purpose**

1. To inform Official Veterinarians (OVs) that Defra has announced new measures to protect England from bovine TB, reinforcing the strategy which is on track to deliver TB-free status for over half of the country by 2019.
2. From 6 April 2016, new legislation will require farmers in the Low Risk Area of England to arrange for post movement testing of cattle coming from the rest of England and from Wales. Following consultation last year, three additional measures will also be introduced on 6 April. These are:
  - Handling of bovine TB breakdowns in the High Risk Area
  - Pre-sale TB check test in the Low Risk Area
  - Private Interferon Gamma Assay blood tests

### **Background**

3. **Introduction of post-movement testing to the Low Risk Area.** From 6 April 2016 farmers in the Low Risk Area (LRA) of England must arrange for post movement tests to be carried out on animals coming from annual (or more frequent) surveillance testing areas of England and Wales, between 60 and 120 days after the animal arrives to the LRA. Some exemptions apply. These tests will be at the cattle keeper's own expense.
  - Please use test code PRI for this type of test until APHA has a specific test code available in Sam (you will be notified when this is available).
  - As this is a private test, the cattle keeper is responsible for payment.
  - Please be aware that this post-movement test needs to be completed between 60 and 120 days of the movement onto the Low Risk Area and should not be carried out before 60 days of that movement onto the premises.

- This test should not be confused with the post-movement test (code POSTMT) necessary when animals that required a pre-movement test have been either:
    - identified as having moved without such test or,
    - allowed to move without a pre-movement test by APHA, in exceptional circumstances.
  - Relevant instructions will be made available shortly on the OV instructions page of the APHA OV Gateway:  
[http://ahvla.defra.gov.uk/External\\_OV\\_Instructions/index.htm](http://ahvla.defra.gov.uk/External_OV_Instructions/index.htm)
  - If you have any concerns or feedback regarding this test please notify your Delivery Partners so they are able to report back to APHA in the scheduled monthly meetings.
- 4. Handling of bovine TB breakdowns in the High Risk Area.** All herds in the High Risk Area (HRA) of England affected by a new TB breakdown will need to complete a minimum of two short interval tests using 'severe' interpretation before restrictions are lifted. This will happen irrespective of whether cattle with typical TB lesions or positive culture results have been identified. This will increase the chances of detecting all infected animals in those herds, helping reduce recurrent infections and protect other herds from the risk of lifting restrictions too early.
5. OVs should be aware that if reactors are found at the disclosing test, then the test will be reinterpreted at 'severe' interpretation once received by the local APHA office. There may be some additional severe reactors identified at this reinterpretation and these will be slaughtered with payment of compensation. It would be helpful if OVs could forewarn such farmers of this reinterpretation when reactors are found so that they will not be caught unawares if further severe reactors are notified later by APHA.
- 6. Pre-sale TB check test in the Low Risk Area.** Cattle keepers with herds on 4 year surveillance testing looking to sell a proportion of their herd, and subject to meeting a specific criteria, will be able to have a Defra funded pre-sale TB check carried out on the whole of the herd. This will provide assurance for prospective buyers on the disease status of the cattle and mitigate the risk of cattle with undetected infection moving to new herds.
- When entering this test on Sam please select the test type CT-LRA-SA (Pre-Sale Check Test in LRA).
  - If you feel that the criteria for this test type is no longer met please ensure you communicate with APHA before carrying out the test.
  - One months' notice should be given when arranging this test type. If for any reason the customer requests this test before this notice then it is at your discretion, as long as statutory testing instructed by APHA is not affected.  
**Please note this only applies for this test type only.**

- Relevant instructions are available on the OV instructions page of the APHA OV Gateway: [http://ahvla.defra.gov.uk/External\\_OV\\_Instructions/index.htm](http://ahvla.defra.gov.uk/External_OV_Instructions/index.htm)
  - If you have any concerns or feedback regarding this test please notify your Delivery Partners so they are able to report back to APHA in the scheduled monthly meetings.
- 7. Private Interferon Gamma Assay blood tests.** APHA will start offering the option of 'private' Interferon Gamma Assay blood tests in certain circumstances. **Permission for these tests must always be sought in advance from APHA.**
- Further guidance for private veterinarians is published on the APHA Vet Gateway: <http://ahvla.defra.gov.uk/vet-gateway/ifng-testing/index.htm>.
8. Defra has issued a series of Bovine TB Information Notes explaining the changes in more detail. Additionally, more information is available for farmers on the TB Hub, the 'go-to' place for British beef and dairy farmers to find practical advice on dealing with bTB on their farm.

#### For further information

- Defra news story: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-cattle-measures-to-help-deliver-tb-freedom-in-england>
- **Introduction of post-movement testing to the Low Risk Area**  
[Bovine TB Information Note 01/16](#)  
TB Hub: <http://www.tbhub.co.uk/guidance/testing-and-compensation/post-movement-testing-in-lra/>
- **Handling of bovine TB breakdowns in the High Risk Area**  
[Bovine TB Information Note 02/16](#)  
- TB Hub: <http://www.tbhub.co.uk/guidance/managing-a-tbbreakdown/managing-tb-breakdowns-in-the-high-risk-area-hra/>
- **Pre-sale TB check test in the Low Risk Area**  
[Bovine TB Information Note 03/16](#)  
TB Hub: <http://www.tbhub.co.uk/guidance/testing-and-compensation/4-yearly-testing-area-pre-sale-check-test/>
- **Private Interferon Gamma Assay blood tests**  
[Bovine TB Information Note 04/16](#)

- **Defra 2015 consultation on Improving Bovine TB controls:**  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/improving-bovine-tb-controls-post-movement-testing-of-cattle-in-england>
- **The strategy for achieving Officially Bovine Tuberculosis Free status for England:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-strategy-for-achieving-officially-bovine-tuberculosis-free-status-for-england>
- **TB Information Hub:** [www.TBhub.co.uk](http://www.TBhub.co.uk)

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