



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

APHA Briefing Note 20/20

To remind OVs of their Responsibilities with regards to TB testing Certification

Date issued: 07 July 2020

Purpose

To remind all Official Veterinarians (OVs) holding the Official Controls Qualification (Veterinary) – Tuberculin Testing (OCQ(V) – TT) that the RCVS Principles of Certification (see link below) apply to TB testing documentation.

Background

RCVS advice was sought after receiving information that some OVs leave TB 52A documentation detailing the TT1 skin thickness readings with livestock keepers between injection day (TT1) and reading day (TT2) of a TB test, without taking any reasonable precautions to ensure that the documents were not altered or tampered with by the livestock keeper.

APHA view was that leaving an original document which a veterinarian intends to rely on for the purposes of certification, in circumstances where it may be open to addition or alteration is in contravention of the RCVS principles of veterinary certification.

The RCVS has agreed with APHA's view, given veterinary obligations under the Code of Professional Conduct (paragraph 6.2) and the supporting guidance in the Chapter 21 which sits behind it. Specifically Principle 6 of Chapter 21 refers – *“Veterinarians should complete certificates with care and accuracy and in a manner and using a means which does not lend itself to alteration, or additions, by a second party after the certificate has been issued”*.

RCVS advice is that it would not be prudent to leave material which a veterinarian intends to rely on for the purposes of certification, in circumstances where, for example, it may be open to addition or alteration.

Action

OVs must not leave any original TT1 test records on farm. Instead if a keeper requires the information following TT1, a **copy** of the records can be supplied to the keeper. The original must be maintained by the OV at all times.

Leaving the original documents with livestock keepers between TT1 and TT2 is an unacceptable practice and a major or critical non-compliance (depending on the individual case circumstances) which may lead to the suspension of the OV.

A new TB Testing Minimum Standards Guidance will be published imminently on the APHA Vet Gateway. This guidance clearly specifies that this activity is a critical non-compliance with the TB testing protocol. OVs are encouraged to review these new minimum standards that will be applied at audit at the earliest opportunity after they are published.

Further Information

If you need any further clarifications with regard to the above please contact the APHA OV team on 0208 026 1094.

Email CSCOneHealthOVTeam@apha.gov.uk

Link to RCVS Principles of Certification:

<https://www.rcvs.org.uk/setting-standards/advice-and-guidance/code-of-professional-conduct-for-veterinary-surgeons/supporting-guidance/certification/>