

Changes to TB Cattle Movement Controls

Bovine TB Information Note 05/12

October 2012 (Updated March 2013)

On **1st January 2013** changes were made to the rules around movements of cattle on and off TB-restricted premises in England. These built upon other tightening of cattle controls introduced in July 2012. See <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animal-diseases/a-z/bovine-tb/publications/> for details.

What has changed?

The following changes were introduced from 1st January 2013:

1. The window for movements of cattle **from TB restricted herds** to live has been reduced from 60 to 30 days from the day of their last tuberculin skin test with negative results.
There has been no change to the policy for movements to slaughter (direct or via an Approved Finishing Unit or slaughter gathering) or for pre-movement testing in unrestricted herds. In these cases movements continue to be permitted, respectively, within 90 and 60 days of a skin test with negative results.
2. Re-stocking of herds with Officially TB Free status suspended (OTFS) is now only permitted after the herd's first breakdown test (i.e. after the initial test reactors have been removed or following the detection of a slaughterhouse case) and subject to a satisfactory veterinary risk assessment by the local AHVLA field office. This change brought such herds into line with the conditions already in place for OTF status withdrawn (OTFW) herds.
3. Approved Quarantine Units (AQUs) are being phased out, i.e. from 1st January 2013 existing AQUs will not be able to re-stock. We expect all AQUs to be abolished by 31 December 2013.
4. Sanctions against operators of Approved Finishing Units (AFU) that breach operating conditions will be reviewed on a case by case basis, with the licence to operate being removed for serious breaches.

All cattle keepers should familiarise themselves with these changes. Further information is available from your local AHVLA office and the AHVLA website, details below.

Why have these changes been made?

These changes will help further reduce the risks of spreading TB through cattle movements whilst maintaining opportunities for cattle keepers affected by TB movement restrictions to continue trading. They will also ensure our cattle movement controls are compliant with EU legal requirements and help us to continue to secure much needed EU co-financing for our TB eradication plan.

Q&A

Were these measures discussed with industry representatives?

Yes. Stakeholder groups provided feedback on our proposals. The Animal Health and Welfare Board for England (AHWBE) and its TB Eradication Advisory Group for England (TBEAG) considered the feedback from stakeholders and endorsed the proposed changes.

Am I affected by these changes?

Owners of TB breakdown herds and AQUs are most directly affected. However, those with a business operating model that depends on the continuous throughput of replacement stock (e.g. beef finishers) should consider putting in place contingency plans to mitigate the impacts of their herd being restricted for TB control purposes.

I operate an Approved Quarantine Unit, what are my options now?

You should contact your local AHVLA office to discuss what might be possible. There are a number of options – for example, provided the calves you purchase are only moved from the AQU to slaughter (either directly or via an Approved Finishing Unit) you could consider applying to the AHVLA for the unit to be re-registered as a 'rearing' AFU.

Does reducing the movement-off window to 30 days for TB restricted herds effectively mean that TB affected farm businesses are no longer able to sell cattle at the TB restricted sales?

TB affected farm businesses can continue to sell cattle at TB restricted sales. However, the option of moving cattle from TB restricted sales to live on other farms (except AFUs) is

no longer available. Over 80% of movements from these sales were previously to slaughter, either directly or via an AFU. Restricting movements from TB restricted sales to slaughter either directly or via an AFU mean that farmers are still able to move cattle off their farms to these sales within 60 days of a clear test.

Is the movement window now 30 days for all cattle movements?

No. The change applies to cattle from TB restricted herds only. The policy change does **not** apply to cattle moved from TB restricted herds to slaughter, either directly, via an Approved Finishing Unit, or via a TB restricted 'orange' sale. The window for such movements is 90 days after a clear test.

The policy change also has no implications for owners of unrestricted herds (i.e. OTF herds), where a pre-movement test with negative results remains valid for 60 days. It is a measure aimed at minimising disease spread risks from breakdown herds only.

Contacts

If you have any further questions on how these changes will affect you, please contact your local AHVLA office. Contact details are available at:

<http://animalhealth.defra.gov.uk/about/contact-us/index.htm>

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www.defra.gov.uk/animal-diseases/a-z/bovine-tb