

# Pre-movement and post-movement testing of cattle in Great Britain



Animal &  
Plant Health  
Agency

## Reducing the risk of the spread of TB through the movement and trading of cattle

Pre- and post- movement TB testing is used to help reduce the risk of spread of TB through movements of cattle. This booklet tells you how to meet these statutory TB testing requirements when moving cattle in England, Wales and Scotland and across the borders of each country.

The pre-movement and post-movement testing rules differ between England, Wales and Scotland, so please read this booklet carefully.

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## Background

Bovine tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious and contagious disease of cattle caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium bovis* (*M. bovis*). All mammalian species, including humans, are susceptible to bovine TB. It is mainly a respiratory disease, transmission can occur through nose to nose contact and also through contact with saliva, urine and faeces. Cattle can become infected when directly exposed to infectious cattle (or other infectious animals) and their excretions.

Movements of cattle are an established means of spreading bovine TB between herds. In particular, movements of cattle from high bovine TB incidence areas of GB pose a substantial risk of introducing the infection to the lower incidence areas of England and Wales and to Scotland, which has been officially free of TB since September 2009.

By ensuring that cattle moved into your herd receive a pre- and/or post- movement TB test you will reduce the risk of introducing this disease into your herd.

Our current strategies are based on maintaining the Officially TB Free status in Scotland and eradicating TB in England and Wales. TB movement testing contributes to these strategies by reducing the risk of disease spread through movements and trading of cattle across GB. The different TB movement testing regimes in England, Scotland and Wales reflect regional variations in disease incidence, including the Officially TB Free status of Scotland.

## General information for all cattle herd owners

Pre- and post- movement tests reduce the risk of spreading TB between herds. For these types of tests only the skin test can be used.

Generally pre and post movement tests must be arranged and paid for by the herd-owner, though cattle keepers can move stock that have tested clear at a government funded TB test, providing that test complies with the requirements for the movement

If you do not have a government funded test arranged or recently completed that will qualify for the movement, you will need to arrange this test with your private vet who must be an Official Veterinarian (OV) registered in the APHA cattle testing panel and authorised to carry out TB testing.

Pre-movement test are valid for 60 days (from the date of the injection: day one of the test). Post-movement tests must be carried out between 60 and 120 days after the movement on to your premises.

It is important to understand that pre-movement testing is applied according to the risk of the herd and not the location of the herd. Therefore herds on an annual routine testing interval (HTI) qualify for pre-movement testing and in England this will include some herds in the Low TB Risk Area.

In all cases, pre- and post-movement TB testing is targeted at movements of cattle from higher TB risk herds.

Clear TB test charts provide confirmation that the tested cattle can be moved. You are required to keep these charts for three years and 60 days as evidence of TB testing. You are also advised to keep evidence for at least three years if cattle have been moved without a test because the herd or movement is exempted from pre-movement testing rules. You are likely to be asked for copies of relevant evidence by recipient cattle keepers seeking buyer assurance.

Please be aware that movement of animals from your holding may be considered a breach of the statutory management requirements applying under the CAP cross compliance if you cannot provide evidence of a clear TB test within 60 days prior to movement, or of an exemption. It may result in a reduction being applied to your Single Farm Payment.

The different testing requirements in England, Wales and Scotland are summarised below.

You are legally obliged to meet the requirements of the country in which you are based. But, if you are moving cattle between different parts of GB you need also to be aware of the testing requirements placed on the herd that is receiving your cattle.

## Keepers in England

Pre-movement testing was introduced in England in 2006.

All cattle over 42 days old moving out of an annually tested herd must have tested negative to a TB test within 60 days prior to movement, (unless the herd or type of movement meets any of the exemptions listed in the table on page 5).

Pre-movement tests must be arranged by the herd owner. Herd owners must also pay for their pre-movement tests, though cattle can be moved following a clear government funded surveillance test.

Herd owners are advised to give their Official Veterinarian plenty of notice to ensure they can move their cattle when they want to.

Herd owners are given a copy of all clear test charts, indicating that they can move the tested cattle.

## Sole Occupancy Authorities (SOAs)

From 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2014 the Pre-movement testing SOA exemption has been removed in both England and Wales.

In England, to ensure that the TB controls are proportionate and consistent with planned changes to the structure of holdings in England (flowing from the Farming Regulation Task Force's 2011 report), pre-movement testing is not required for moves between holdings within SOAs that only include holdings within 10 miles of the main farm. Such movements are permitted under the terms of a general licence issued by Defra available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-licence-for-the-movement-of-cattle-within-sole-occupancy-authorities>.

In Wales, cattle keepers who already possess a SOA are able to apply for an Interim Land Association Management (ILAM) agreement allowing them to move cattle between premises within the ILAM without having to have a PrMT. A number of criteria apply to the granting of an ILAM, the main one being that the boundary of land in the destination premises must be within 10 miles of the boundary of the main farm premises. This is an interim measure designed specifically to bridge the gap between the removal of PrMT exemption for movements within SOAs and the completion of the ongoing County Parish Holding (CPH) review process when new arrangements will be introduced. To apply for an ILAM, please contact your local vet.

For further information, please visit:

England

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bovine-tb-information-note-changes-to-tb-cattle-movement-controls-exemptions>

Wales

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/bovinetuberculosis/cattlecontrols/pre-movement-testing/question-and-answer/?lang=en>

## Keepers in Wales

Pre-movement testing was introduced in Wales in 2006 and new legislation in 2010 made some changes to the exemptions to pre-movement testing requirements.

All cattle over 42 days old moving out of an annually tested herd must have tested negative to a TB test within 60 days prior to movement, (unless the herd or type of movement meets any of the exemptions listed in the table on page 9).

All pre-movement tests must be arranged and paid for by the herd owner.

Herd owners are advised to give their Official Veterinarian plenty of notice so they can move their cattle when they want to.

Routine TB surveillance tests paid for by the Government count as pre-movement tests for 60 days for animals included in that test.

Herd owners are given a copy of all clear test charts, where the herd is eligible to move cattle.

Owners of cattle eligible for a PrMT in Wales use a sticker, which is applied to the passport, with the date of the last clear TB test on that individual animal.

## The exemptions from pre-movement testing

Some low risk cattle movements are exempted from pre-movement testing. These exemptions are listed below. You should keep documentary evidence of cattle you move under these exemptions for at least three years. You may be asked for copies of relevant evidence by those who purchase your cattle or in the event of enforcement action.

A failure to comply with TB testing rules constitutes a breach of the statutory management requirements applying under the CAP cross compliance and may result in a reduction to the herd owner's Single Farm Payment.

The table below i) outlines the herds and movements exempted from pre-movement testing; and ii) provide examples of evidence you are advised to keep.

| Exemption  | Evidence  |
|--|---|
| Cattle moving from herds in England or Scotland subject to four yearly routine TB testing  | The letter issued annually by APHA informing the keeper of the routine TB testing interval for their cattle |
| Cattle originating from the four year testing areas in England but on more frequent testing regimes due to public health concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• open farms</li><li>• producers/retailers of raw milk</li></ul>  | The letter issued annually by APHA informing the keeper of the routine TB testing interval for their cattle |
| Cattle at an artificial insemination (AI) centre   | The approval licence issued by APHA   |
| Cattle under 42 days old   | Cattle passports  |
| Cattle moving directly to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• slaughter</li><li>• a market from which all animals go direct to slaughter</li><li>• Pre-movement Exempt Finishing Units (EFU)</li><li>• Pre-movement Exempt Markets (EM)</li><li>• Approved TB Finishing Units (AFU) in yearly testing areas.</li><li>• Approved TB collection centres</li></ul> | On-farm cattle movement records and details of market designations such as market catalogues                |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>Cattle moving to an exempt agricultural show (provided that the animal is returned to the premises of origin or moved direct to slaughter)</p> <p>A show will be classed as exempt if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no cattle are to remain on the showground for a period of 24 hours or more</li> <li>• no cattle are to be housed i.e. any covered area with sides, which includes a marquee</li> </ul>  | <p>A declaration from the show that it is eligible for exemption</p>                                     |
| <p>Cattle moving for veterinary treatment (provided that the animal is returned to the premises or origin or moved direct to slaughter)</p>  | <p>Records of veterinary treatment<br/>On-farm cattle movement records<br/>On-farm medicines records</p> |
| <p>In Wales, cattle moving between premises sharing rights of the same common</p>  | <p>Documentary evidence of rights of common</p>  |
| <p>Cattle moving under specific written exemption granted by a Welsh Minister on behalf of the Welsh Government (in exceptional circumstances) these exemptions are contained in a Ministerial Direction available at:<br/><a href="http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/bovinetuberculosis/cattlecontrols/pre-movement-testing/ministerial-direction/?lang=en">http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/bovinetuberculosis/cattlecontrols/pre-movement-testing/ministerial-direction/?lang=en</a></p> | <p>Written exemption in Ministerial Direction from Welsh Government</p>                                  |



## Keepers in Scotland

Pre- and post-movement testing was introduced in Scotland in September 2005.

All cattle over 42 days old in a yearly testing area must be pre-movement tested before they move from or enter any Scottish herd and also must be post-movement tested between 60-120 days of their arrival in a Scottish herd.

Cattle imported from Northern Ireland must also be post-movement tested between 60 and 120 days of their arrival in a Scottish herd unless they will be slaughtered within 120 days of import.

All pre- and post-movement tests must be arranged and paid for by the herd owner. However, routine TB surveillance tests paid for by the Government count as pre- and post-movement tests for 60 days in a Scottish herd provided that the test complies with the requirements for the movement.

You are advised to keep evidence of tuberculin tests for three years. Herd owners are given a copy of the test results where the herd is eligible to move cattle. It is in your best interest to keep such evidence as you may be asked for copies of relevant evidence by recipient cattle keepers seeking buyer assurance or in the event of enforcement action.

APHA monitors the movements of animals and compliance with the testing requirements. Random spot checks are carried out and where non-compliance is discovered whole herd movement restrictions are imposed.

Cattle movements to shows/exhibitions will not be affected if animals return from the show/exhibition to the farm of origin, although it should be noted that some show organisers may request that cattle are TB tested before going to the show. Cattle in an annual testing area going to a market should be pre-movement tested if there is a possibility that they could then be moved to a different holding in Scotland. Purchasers are advised to make enquiries at the point of sale.

## **Cross border movements**

### **Movements from England and Wales into Scotland**

English and Welsh herd owners must adhere to their country's rules for pre-movement testing when moving cattle out of England or Wales.

Scottish herd owners will want to make sure that any cattle over 42 days old from the annual testing area in England and from Wales moving into their herd are pre-movement tested. If this has not been done then the Scottish keeper will have to pay for two post-movement tests on these cattle, 60-120 days apart.

Additionally cattle over 42 days old moving from herds that are subject to 4 yearly testing in England (including herds subject to annual testing in the four yearly testing area) must be pre-movement tested, unless they have since birth resided in a low incidence area (the four yearly testing area in England). These cattle do not need to be post-movement tested between 60-120 days of their arrival in a Scottish herd.

### **Movements from Scotland into England and Wales**

Scottish herd owners must adhere to the Scottish rules for pre-movement testing when moving cattle out of Scotland. There may be occasions where animals do not need to be pre-movement tested under Scottish law but English and Welsh recipients may request it e.g. for cattle from annual testing herds unless they fall within one of the exemptions.

## Exempt Markets and Pre-movement Testing Exempt Finishing Units

These facilities can only be approved in England and Wales.

### Pre-movement Testing Exempt Finishing Units

These provide a route for beef producers to finish animals for slaughter without the need to pre-movement test.

In England only, operators may accept other cattle into the unit if they wish i.e. cattle that have completed a pre-movement test and also cattle exempt from pre-movement testing. Pre-movement Exempt Finishing Units must be approved by APHA and meet strict conditions designed to minimise the risk of disease spread from the premises.

Onward movements are restricted to slaughter, either direct to the slaughterhouse or via an approved slaughter market.

For further details and a list of the current premises approved to operate as exempt finishing units within England and Wales is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exempt-finishing-units-for-cattle-approved-premises>

### Exempt Markets

In England, these markets are primarily for the sale of cattle that have not been pre-movement tested.

Market operators may also accept other cattle into an Exempt Market if they wish. Onward movements are restricted to direct to slaughter; direct to an exempt finishing unit; direct to an approved finishing unit in a yearly testing area or back to the premises of origin except for cattle from four yearly tested herds which are not permitted to return to the premises of origin.

In Wales, Exempt Markets are primarily for the sale of cattle from annually tested herds that have not been pre-movement tested but that should have been. Onward movements are restricted to direct to slaughter; direct to an exempt finishing unit; direct to an approved finishing unit in a yearly testing area or back to the premises or origin.

A list of some of the exempt markets in England and Wales is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exempt-finishing-units-for-cattle-approved-premises>

For further details, please contact your local APHA office or market operator.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about/access-and-opening>

## Contact us and other information

Contact details for your local APHA office

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about/access-and-opening>

For information regarding policy, and general enquiries about the changes affecting England, please contact the Defra Helpline on 03459 33 55 77 or by email to [defra.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:defra.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk).

Further information can also be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/reducing-bovine-tuberculosis>

For information regarding policy, and general enquiries about the changes affecting Scotland, please contact the Scottish Government on 0300 244 9874 or by email to

[Animal.Health@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Animal.Health@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

Further information can also be found at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/>

For information regarding policy, and general enquiries about the changes affecting Wales, please contact the Welsh Government on 0300 060 3300 (English speakers) or 0300 060 4400 (Welsh speakers) or by email to [bovineTB@wales.gov.co.uk](mailto:bovineTB@wales.gov.co.uk)

Further information can also be found at:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/bovinetuberculosis/cattlecontrols/pre-movement-testing/?lang=en>

You can also contact the BCMS Helpline to discuss CTS issues including linked holdings. The helpline is open 8:30am to 5pm from Monday to Friday and can be contacted on 0845 050 1234 (or 0845 050 3456 Welsh language).

If you need to set up a temporary CPH or register a new permanent one, contact the RPA Customer Registration Team on 0845 603 7777 and choose Option 6. It is important to note that setting up a new CPH can take up to 10 working days, so allow sufficient time before moving your animals.

Further information can also be found at <https://www.gov.uk/get-a-cph-number-from-the-rural-payments-agency>

## Commonly asked questions

### **What is my herd testing interval?**

Your herd TB testing interval will be set out in your annual TB testing interval statement sent by APHA. Most herd testing intervals are set to the testing interval of their area. However, a small number of herds in lower TB risk areas are tested more frequently than others in their area for disease control purposes or due to the type of business. These include city or open farms, artificial insemination (AI) centres, producers/retailers of raw milk, heifer rearers, dealer herds, regular importers of Irish cattle and bull hirers. If you are not clear what testing frequency you are on, contact your local APHA office.

### **Can I find out about other testing areas?**

Yes, a map showing the testing intervals for different parts of the country can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bovine-tb-testing-intervals-2014>

### **Can a herd test count as a pre- or post-movement test?**

Yes, as long as the cattle are moved within 60 days of their clear test (60 days from day one of the skin test).

### **What if I bring animals into my herd within 60 days prior to my routine surveillance test being carried out, do they have to be tested?**

If they have not been TB tested within the last 60 days they must be included within your herd's surveillance test. If they have been tested within the 60 days before your herd's surveillance test they will not need to be re-tested. You should discuss which animals need to be tested with your Official Veterinarian (OV) or an APHA Veterinary Officer. They may need to see proof of the dates of the pre-movement test.

### **I am thinking of sourcing stock from another herd, can I find out about their testing history?**

Local APHA/APHA offices cannot give out individual herd details. However, you should request this information from the vendor. Before bringing new animals onto your premises, you are advised to request evidence that a test has been carried out within the 60 days preceding the proposed movement date or evidence that the herd is exempt from pre-movement testing.

### **Who can carry out TB pre- or post-movement tests?**

All TB tests must be carried out by authorised TB testers. This would be an Official Veterinarian for pre and post movement tests, your private vet will usually be appointed as an authorised tester.

### **How much will my Official Veterinarian charge?**

This is a private transaction between you and your Official Veterinarian.

### **Do I have to pre-movement test cattle going to and from grass keep?**

Yes, unless the herd or movements meet any of the exemptions listed on pages 5 and 8.

**Do animals moving on to premises in Scotland, which will be going for slaughter within 120 days of arrival, have to be pre- and post-movement tested?**

Cattle moving directly to slaughter in Scotland are not required to be tested. Cattle moved for further fattening before slaughter do become subject to the pre-movement test. Post-movement testing is also required if slaughter is after 120 days of arrival in Scotland.

**How will I know if I need to pre-movement test my cattle before going to shows in England and Wales?**

Your show organiser will be able to advise you on the requirements for their show.

**Can I take cattle to multiple shows?**

A clear pre-movement test is valid for 60 days from the date of the test. Therefore animals can be moved to more than one show during that post-test period provided that the last movement back to the home premises or to slaughter, if applicable, is completed within 60 days of the test date. You should not book a TB test to take place within 60 days of completion of the previous TB test as this will not be regarded as an authorised test.

**I operate a SOA in England that includes holdings in areas subject to yearly routine TB tests only. Will I be affected by the revoked exemption for SOAs?**

Yes, unless you can comply with the conditions of the General Licence issued by Defra in England, or have been granted an Interim Land Association Management (ILAM) agreement in Wales. Further information referring to the removal of the SOA exemption can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bovine-tb-information-note-changes-to-tb-cattle-movement-controls-exemptions>

**I operate a SOA in England that includes holdings in annual routine TB testing areas and four yearly testing areas; do I have to pre-movement test cattle moved within my SOA?**

Yes; further information referring to the removal of the SOA exemption is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bovine-tb-information-note-changes-to-tb-cattle-movement-controls-exemptions>

**I operate a SOA in Wales and wish to know more about applying for an ILAM agreement?**

A further Q&A referring specifically to the ILAM change is available at: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/bovinetuberculosis/cattlecontrols/pre-movement-testing/question-and-answer/?lang=en>

**Do I have to pre-movement test cattle moving between linked holdings?**

Yes; unless the herd meets any of the exemptions listed on pages 5 and 8.

**What happens if a reactor is found through a pre-movement test?**

Your herd will be placed under movement restrictions and will be subject to the controls applied to a breakdown herd.

**What happens if I move cattle that were not pre-movement tested, and were not exempt?**

APHA monitor cattle movement and cattle testing records and report suspected breaches to the local authorities to investigate non-compliance. Anyone found in breach of TB testing rules may be prosecuted and also face a reduction to their Single Farm Payment.

**What happens if I receive cattle that were not pre-movement tested, and were not exempt?**

You should isolate the cattle as soon as possible, arrange and pay for a TB test to be carried out and inform your local APHA office. Where APHA detect that a herd has received cattle that have not had a TB test (within 60 days of their movement) and were not exempt from pre-movement testing, APHA will contact the receiving herd owner and place the cattle under movement restrictions specifying a date by which the received cattle must be tested. If this test is not completed, the whole herd will be placed under movement restrictions until the received cattle have been post-movement tested.

**What happens if am located in Scotland and buy animals from a farm in Scotland that have recently come from England and have not yet been post-movement tested?**

You become responsible for the post-movement testing of the cattle within the period of 60-120 days after the arrival at the first farm in Scotland. The vendor should inform you at the point of sale. If in doubt you should make enquiries of the vendor.

**What other measures can I take to reduce the risk of TB in my herd?**

See the leaflets: 'Dealing with TB in your Herd: How to reduce the risk of TB in your herd'.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-cattle-against-tb-infection-in-high-incidence-areas>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-cattle-against-tb-infection-in-high-incidence-areas>



Animal &  
Plant Health  
Agency



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



The Scottish  
Government

The Animal and Plant Health Agency is an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs working to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.

[www.gov.uk/apha](http://www.gov.uk/apha)

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