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# Background

Considerable progress has been made in the BVD programme in terms of both animal and herd level prevalence since the start of the compulsory phase in 2013.

A further measure of progress within the programme is the number of herds that have achieved negative herd status (NHS) by:

- (i) having a known negative result for all animals in the herd based on either direct (testing) or indirect (producing one or more calves with a negative status) results, and
- (i) not having contained (or currently containing) any cattle considered persistently infected with BVD virus in the preceding 12 months (anticipated to change to 18 months from 2021).

Based on these criteria, over 95% of breeding herds currently have NHS. However, 4.5% of herds do not qualify for NHS due to the presence of one or more animals whose status is not known.

The goal is to have at least 99.8% of herds with NHS. Therefore, it is critical that this relatively small number of animals are sampled and tested.

Legislation was amended in May 2020 (**Statutory Instrument No.182/2020 (Bovine Viral Diarrhoea** (**amendment) Regulations 2020**)) making compulsory the testing of all cattle, including animals born before the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013, for the presence of bovine viral diarrhoea virus. This excludes female animals that have had one or more calves which have been tested for BVD.

# **Development of BVD alerts on handheld devices**

BVD test results received by ICBF are transferred to AHCS, where they are translated into a range of statuses, including those shown in Table 1. DAFM make BVD animal status available through the Animal Health Computer System (AHCS) to each practice for the herds for which they are nominated to carry out TB testing.

# **Untested** animals

Animals that do not have any test result recorded can be identified on AHCS and these will trigger alerts. Whether these are born before or after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013, they are required by law to have a valid BVD status.

Untested animals will trigger the following alerts:

BVD Untested (DOB after 1Jan13) Take blood sample (Y/N)? BVD Untested (DOB pre-1Jan13) Take blood sample (Y/N)? In such cases, blood samples should be taken by you, or tissue tag samples collected by the farmer. No financial support is currently available for the sampling of these animals. However, the testing of the samples sent to Sligo RVL will be done free of charge. Samples should be submitted with the blood sample submission form available in the 'Service Provider Portal'.

Should you decide to send blood samples to a designated private laboratory, remember that calves must be over 75 days of age before being tested by antigen ELISA (calves under 75 days should be tested by RT-PCR only due to the 'Diagnostic Gap').

### Animals tested with non-negative results or statuses

These cover three different situations:

- 1. Animals from which a tissue tag was submitted which was found not to contain any tissue or which generated an invalid result (EMPTY/INVALID status on ICBF).
- 2. Animals with a BVD suspect status typically due to their being the dam of an animal with a current positive result (DAMPI status on ICBF).
- 3. Animals with a current positive or inconclusive result (considered to be Persistently Infected [PI] in the absence of a subsequent negative result).

Movement of animals falling into any of these situations is prohibited under the BVD Regulations (2017), with the exception of movement direct to slaughter for those under situations 2 and 3.

The handheld device can automatically trigger a series of alerts for these three situations as shown in Table 1.

Where an alert is triggered for an animal with a current positive or inconclusive result, or a suspect BVD status, this will provide an opportunity for you to:

- 1. Where the alert is triggered for an animal that had an empty/invalid sample, to take a blood sample and submit it to Sligo RVL.
- 2. Collect a blood sample to clarify the status of an animal with a suspect status (e.g. DAMPI) and submit it to Sligo RVL.
- 3. Reinforce key biosecurity and programme messages centred on the importance of prompt removal of PIs and the risks that these animals pose to their own and neighbouring herds and the programme generally.
- 4. Allow you to pay particular attention to your own biosecurity moving between herds.
- 5. It is recommended that re-testing to confirm the status of animals with initial positive or inconclusive results is only done following review of initial test values and the herd epidemiological situation and where this indicates that the animal is likely to be transiently infected. Failure to remove PI animals within 10 days of their initial result will result in the loss of the majority of the financial supports provided for their removal. The performance of confirmatory testing in 2021 is currently under review.

# **BVD Handheld Guidelines 2020**

Status	Explanation	Alert	Action
BVD NOSMP	Previous tag empty/result invalid SAMPLE REQUIRED	BVD NOSMP Take blood sample (Y/N)?	Blood to Sligo RVL or tissue tag
BVD Untested DOB after 1st Jan 13	Animal required by legislation to be tested for BVD	BVD Untested (DOB after 1Jan13) Take blood sample (Y/N)?	Blood to Sligo RVL or tissue tag
BVD Untested DOB before 1st Jan 13	Animal required by legislation to be tested for BVD	BVD Untested (DOB pre-1Jan13) Take blood sample (Y/N)?	Blood to Sligo RVL or tissue tag
PI Pos	Most recent result is POSITIVE	PI Pos Take blood sample (Y/N)?	Biosecurity To be removed ASAP
Pl Inc	Most recent result is INCONCLUSIVE	PI Inc Take blood sample (Y/N)?	Biosecurity Blood to Sligo RVL
BVD Pos	Animal that had OFFPI/DAMPI status whose most recent result is POSITIVE	BVD Pos Take blood sample (Y/N)?	Biosecurity To be removed ASAP
BVD Inc	Animal that had OFFPI/DAMPI status whose most recent result is INCONCLUSIVE	BVD Inc Take blood sample (Y/N)?	Biosecurity Blood to Sligo RVL
BVD Sus	Animal has DAMPI or OFFPI status; SAMPLE REQUIRED	BVD Sus Take blood sample (Y/N)?	Biosecurity Blood to Sligo RVL

 Table 1: Handheld BVD statuses and alerts. Note that if an animal has an inconclusive retest result following an initial positive, its status will still be shown as positive.

### Switching alerts off and on

On the handheld's screen 1, where farmer names & herd numbers etc are displayed, typing **BVD** followed by **ENTER** key enables or disables the BVD functionality.

If you opt for enabled, you will be asked whether you wish to include all animals, including those born before 1.1.13. <u>Please enter</u> Y and press **ENTER** to enable:

**BVD** sampling enabled

Test animals born before January 2013?

A list of animals generating alerts in a handheld, reflecting the chosen configuration, can be generated on the handheld or in the office for each herd. To view these reports, on screen 4, press F4 and **REPORTS** and arrow down to BVD Status.

#### TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

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### NATIONAL BVD ERADICATION PROGRAMME

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