



Tern Vets Ltd

PUTTING CARE INTO PRACTICE

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Your dedicated farm
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NEW TB RULES FOR LIVESTOCK MOVEMENTS

New TB rules on “temporary land use” would mean animals moving to and from registered land within 10 miles from your holding won’t need a pre-movement TB test. These will fully replace existing SOA (Sole Occupancy Agreements) and CTS links by 2017. You will be informed between now and July 2017 about what you need to do next.

Temporary Land Use:

If you rent land temporarily (for one year or less) to keep livestock you have two options:

1. If your livestock will be mixing with livestock on the rented land you still use their CPH when reporting movements to or from that land, and these animals will still need pre-movement testing.
2. If you have sole occupancy of the temporary land (so your animals are not mixing with livestock kept by anyone else) you can apply for either a Temporary Land Association (TLA) or a Temporary CPH (tCPH) number.

Temporary Land Associations (TLA):

- Need to be **within 10 miles** of your CPH number
- Need to be used for less than 12 months (with an option to renew)
- Need to be in the same TB risk area as your original CPH number
- Would **not** require pre-movement TB testing
- During that time the land would be treated as part of your CPH so movements between your land wouldn’t need recording or reporting, and wouldn’t trigger a standstill.
- Movements onto the temporary land from anywhere else would need registering and reporting via your original CPH and would trigger a standstill.

Temporary CPH’s (tCPH):

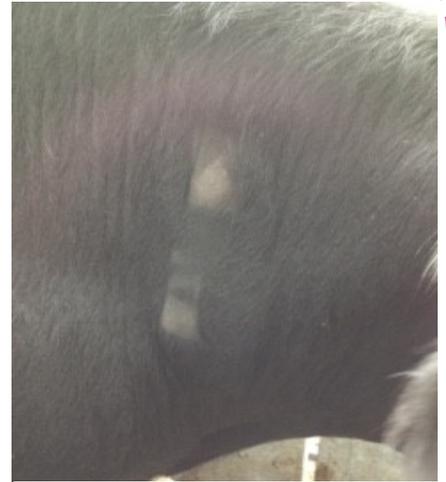
- Can be any distance from your CPH number
- Need to be used for 12 months or less (with an option to renew)
- Can be in a different TB risk area from your original CPH number
- Would require pre-movement testing
- During that time the land would be treated as a separate CPH so movements between your land would need recording and reporting, and would trigger a standstill.

If you have a TB breakdown on your CPH number, TLA or tCPH, then all cattle linked on all holdings would come under the same testing regime.

TB reactors - what science?

Sadly many of you will have had the misfortune of having TB reactors in the past and will have experienced the different outcomes of having reactor animals removed and the different testing regimes and interpretation levels that follow a herd breakdown. This article explains the science behind the TB test for those of you who want to know a bit more.

All TB skin tests are read on “standard interpretation” unless the farm is under TB restrictions, in which case the test is read under “severe interpretation”. Standard interpretation allows a bigger bottom “bovine” lump before the animal is deemed a reactor compared to reading the test on severe interpretation. In certain TB breakdowns Animal Health may also want to do a “Gamma interferon test” which is a TB blood test to pick up early TB infections.



A recent reactor animal with very obvious lumps.

All scientific tests are a balance between “sensitivity” and “specificity” - sensitivity is a measure of how good the test is at picking up positives whereas specificity is a measure of how much you can trust the test is if you do find a positive. The sensitivity and specificity of the various TB tests are shown below in the table:

	Sensitivity (%)	Specificity (%)
Skin test at standard interpretation	81	99.98
Skin test at severe interpretation	85	99.9
Gamma blood test	90	96.5

This means at standard interpretation the skin TB test will miss 19 in every 100 truly infected animals, and if you do get a reactor only 2 in every 10,000 will be wrong and actually uninfected - so although the skin test isn't very good at picking up **all** the positives, if you get a positive reactor then that will be a true result in the vast majority of cases.

In a confirmed TB outbreak we use “severe interpretation” to try and pick up more infected animals but it doesn't change the sensitivity by a lot - we still will miss 15 out of every 100 truly infected animals.

The Gamma blood test is used in certain outbreaks to pick up the very early infections and will improve sensitivity so that 90% of infected animals will show up, but the specificity drops - so 35 in 10,000 reactors will be wrongly identified and are actually uninfected.

What about reactors that have No Visible Lesions (NVL) at slaughter?

Sometimes we get queries from farmers that their reactor animals had NVL at post mortem examination in the slaughter house - the lack of TB lesions and abscesses doesn't mean the animal wasn't infected with TB, it just means the disease was picked up early enough and the animal didn't have time to grow the characteristic abscesses. Accurate, regular TB testing and early removal of reactors **before** they have time to make infective abscesses reduces the risk of cow-to-cow (and cow-to-human) spread so is an important part of controlling bovine TB on your farm.

Booking festive TB tests

If your TB test falls over the festive period please make sure you phone and get it booked in as soon as possible. The way the festive bank holidays fall this year mean we will have quite a disrupted TB calendar over Christmas and New Year.

Michelle can be reached on 01630 656300 for all TB enquiries.