

## BTV Update 31 December 2008

Sweden has commenced a BTV8 vaccination programme, which looks on paper to be a good plan.

Holland is has made BTV 8 vaccination voluntary in 2009. They had a very successful programme in 2008.

France has declared all France a BTV8 and BTV1 Protection Zone (PZ). Animals are not allowed to move from the original BTV1 zone to the new one under French domestic law. This in simple terms prevents live export from France for the time being though transit is allowed under conditions. If we are lucky France will now execute an effective BTV vaccination plan and protect UK and other member states (MS) from BTV by controlling it in France. MS are applying considerable pressure to France to implement an effective policy.

The EU has voted on a new zone to allow vaccination without circulation. This will come into law in January 2009 and we need to see the final law to be certain of its wording. At present the vaccination without circulation zone is being referred to as the Blue Zone (BZ). We expect France to reclassify Northern France as BZ for BTV1 when the new regulation comes into force. Movements to live from the BZ to the Free Area are not quite as rigorous as they are from the PZ and we will circulate them when the regulation comes into force. The surveillance requirements for the BZ are very onerous and whilst there is discussion in GB about the possible use of this zone for BTV8 it is unlikely to be cost effective and having at last got GB into one zone (after 17 months of restrictions to trade) hopefully we will all remain one zone. The BZ is not a silver bullet though it could facilitate protective vaccination without importation of infected animals.

England has published the plan for BTV8 vaccination in 2009. No further purchase of vaccine by government and voluntary vaccination of ruminants.

Efforts are being made to extend the shelf life of the vaccine presently held in England but as the vaccine is new there may not be sufficient data available to satisfy VMD and the answer to this question is unlikely to come forward quickly. Vaccine stocks in England have a use by of;

Intervet	20ml bottles	28 Feb 2009
Intervet	50 ml	30 June 2009
Merial	100ml	June to 26 Aug 2009

Fort Dodge has a licensed vaccine for use in UK and other companies may come into the market, other bottle sizes may come on to the market.

DO NOT expect government to allow vaccine to run out of date and be lost. As 'Use By' date approaches if English livestock keepers have not purchased the vaccine it is likely to be sold to other MS.

The fact that BTV was not found in England in 2008 does not mean it was not circulating. There is still a risk and I suggest that distance from the south east is not a guarantee of safety. The risk from animal movement is huge and the only protection from the threat is vaccination. Vaccine has been shown to work in Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg and England. Some farmers are still importing positive animals the last ones arrived on 5 December. I do not recommend waiting for a BTV1 and BTV8 vaccine, it may not come to the market in 2009 and the advent of a bivalent vaccine would not necessarily be a good reason to declare a BTV1 zone.

I am hopeful that at least one company will apply for a licence for BTV1 vaccine early in 2009. The licensing process takes months not days and does NOT guarantee that vaccine will be available if needed.

We must continue to be thoughtful about animal movement and encourage others to do likewise. We can expect the policy of slaughter of imported BTV1 positives at the owner's expense to continue. If there is a delay establishing the serotype of a positive that could be BTV1 then the owner can expect it to be slaughtered before serotyping is complete. There is no compensation for this; slaughter is at the owner's expense as is the carcass disposal.

I encourage you all to order your vaccine for 2009, get on and use it and encourage others to do likewise.

Happy New Year and hopefully a disease free one.

Duff Burrell, Chairman NBA