



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Protect Your Herd from Disease



Buying in cattle always carries the risk of introducing disease. Ask for information about the disease history of an animal and the herd it comes from **before you buy**. This will help you to make a more informed decision about the level of risk and how you can manage it.

The impact of bringing in disease

Infectious diseases such as Bovine TB, Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD), Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR), Johne's and Leptospirosis can impact on your herd and business in a number of ways:

- Restrictions on animal movements
- Production and economic losses
- Animals suffering and dying
- Culling of infected animals
- Loss of valuable genetics
- Possible risk to human health

Risk based trading – ask before you buy

The adoption of Risk Based Trading (RBT) supported the eradication of bovine TB from Australia and is contributing to the eradication of the disease in New Zealand. RBT is also an important component of Australia's national Johne's disease control plan.

For RBT to work, information needs to be exchanged between sellers and buyers so that buyers have a better understanding of the risk of introducing disease to their herd. Providing information at the point of sale allows buyers to make more informed buying decisions and to take sensible precautions in the introduction of new animals.

What precautions can you take?

You can reduce the risk of disease being introduced into your herd by asking sellers or auctioneers the following questions before you buy:

- Does the animal come from a herd which is accredited free of any infectious diseases?

Disease-free accreditation schemes exist for BVD, IBR and Leptospirosis whilst the Johne's scheme categorises herds according to their risk of selling infected animals.

- Has the animal been tested as being free from any particular disease? If so, how and when?
- Has the animal been vaccinated for any particular disease? Vaccines are available for BVD, IBR and Leptospirosis.

Isolate, test and / or vaccinate

Arrangements for introducing new cattle to your herd should be part of your herd plan agreed with your vet. It is best practice to isolate incoming cattle in an appropriate isolation facility. Isolate somewhere where no physical contact can be made with other livestock. Other cattle should not share the same air space or have access to drainage or manure from the isolation facility. When in the isolation facility, check the cattle daily for any signs of illness.

There are other precautions you can take:

- During the isolation period the animal(s) can be tested and/or vaccinated for BVD, IBR and Leptospirosis. You may also need to protect incoming animals from infection already present in your herd. You should discuss this with your vet in advance.
- Agree a testing programme with your vet. Mature cattle should be blood tested for Johne's disease. It is also good practice to TB test any animal after arrival, especially if it has not recently been tested.

- Milk isolated cattle separately, ideally using dedicated portable equipment. If this is not practical, milk cattle in an existing facility after the rest of the herd has been milked and left the parlour.

Remember the risk of new disease being introduced is two way. Bought in animals can spread disease to your herd but cattle in your herd can also spread disease to introduced stock.

What are the benefits of risk based trading?

- Helps to protect your herd and neighbouring herds from disease
- Reduces the potential spread of diseases to new areas
- Helps to maintain productive and healthy herds
- Will cut disease treatment costs over time

Work with your vet to implement health planning for your herd. If you are in any doubt about disease risk from purchased cattle, get advice from your vet.

