

## Update – Ongoing screening of bulk tank milk

The *M. bovis* Programme is conducting ongoing nationwide Bulk Tank Milk Surveillance (BTMS) of all supplying dairy farms.

A sample is taken in the first two weeks of each month and is screened for *M. bovis* using the ELISA test. Farms with a detect result are placed under a Notice of Direction restricting cattle movements out of the supplying herd while on farm sampling takes place.

Because of changes to the way we're sampling on farm, we've significantly reduced the time farms are under restrictions.

From the most recent testing period (July-Nov) 68 farms had a detect result. So far two of these properties have been found to be infected. Most of the others have been cleared and had restrictions lifted, and a few are still completing on farm testing.

For the autumn-winter period there were 157 farms with a detect result, five of which were found to be infected, and another five are completing additional on farm testing.

The vast majority of farms with bulk tank milk ELISA-detect results were confirmed as not infected with *M. bovis*. Typically, 3.5 percent of farms with a detect result (that weren't already known to be infected) are found to be infected.

Once a farm is confirmed infected we investigate how the disease got onto the farm, and how the farm is connected to the network. We would expect to find farms through BTMS that we haven't traced to yet, which allows us to prevent further spread off these farms earlier. For farms that we are investigating due to bulk tank milk ELISA detect results, when we go on farm and confirm that they are negative, the time from serving the movement restriction to lifting the movement restriction is on average 29 days.

Currently, non-detect results are not communicated to farmers. An automated system for reporting bulk tank milk ELISA non-detect results to farmers is in being actively developed. Our goal is for farmers to be able to access bulk tank milk non-detect results in early 2020.

*The table below is a summary (as at 26 Nov. 2019) of the outcomes of bulk tank milk screening for the 2019 autumn-winter and for the ongoing regime.*

Screening period	Number of ELISA tests performed	Number of farms screened	Number of farms with a detect result	Number of new farms confirmed as infected
Autumn-Winter 2019	34,033	10,556	157	5
Ongoing 2019	43,532	11,213	68	2