

# Bovine tuberculosis: guidance on management of the public health consequences of tuberculosis in cattle and other animals

SHPN guide to using the external guidance

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## Contents

### Overview

Intended audience

What the guidance covers

### Guide for use in Scotland

Bovine TB in Scotland

Terminology differences

Legislation differences

[View the external guidelines](#)

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## Overview

This Scottish Health Protection Network (SHPN) guide should be used alongside the external guidance that it relates to.

This guide covers the UKHSA 'Bovine tuberculosis: guidance on management of the public health consequences of tuberculosis in cattle and other animals (England)'.

This external guidance has been approved for use in Scotland by the SHPN Guidance Group (SHPN-GG).

## Intended audience

This guidance is for health protection professionals only.

Other people who require advice should contact their local health protection team.

## What the guidance covers

This guidance covers assessing the risk to people who have been in close contact with *Mycobacterium bovis* (M. bovis) infected animals.

## Guide for use in Scotland

The following recommendations for using this guidance in Scotland were agreed by the SHPN through the agreed review and adoption process.

This guidance has been adopted in Scotland as it provides a very clear guide to a measured and consistent response and course of action in the event of notification of animal TB incidents to health boards in Scotland by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA).

It has been confirmed verbally with APHA that they would notify animal TB incidents to health boards in Scotland in exactly the same way as described in this guidance.

Reviewers from Scotland contributed to the original production of the guidance and are very confident about the accuracy and rigour with which it has been developed.

## Bovine TB in Scotland

At the current time, animal TB incidents are rare occurrences in Scotland, though a small number are identified each year.

As a result, Scotland enjoys officially TB-free (OTF) status based on current incidence in cattle herds. This incidence is below a very low threshold agreed at EU level.

This doesn't mean that there are never any cases, but these occur infrequently and can almost always be traced to imported animals from higher-risk areas elsewhere (usually England, Wales or Ireland).

For cattle to be imported from higher-risk areas in these countries, they have to come from herds not currently under any disease restrictions (including TB) and the cattle have to be clear on pre- and post-movement TB testing (though, of course, false negatives do occur from time to time).

## Terminology differences

As the guidance has been produced for England and Wales, there are a number of places in which the specific terminology is inappropriate for Scotland. Some replacements or translations will be needed so as to avoid confusion in Scotland, including in sample letters.

Specifically, there are numerous references throughout the text and appendices to the following.

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## Legislation differences

Legislation covering the sale of raw milk is different in Scotland.

The Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF) advise that pasteurisation is the key critical control point in the prevention of milk-borne disease and completely inactivates *M. bovis*.

In Scotland, it is illegal to place raw milk or cream on the market for direct consumption in Scotland.

- The ban was introduced in 1983 to prohibit the sale of raw cows' drinking milk.
- It was extended to drinking milk from all farmed animals in 2006.
- The ban does not apply to dairy products made with unpasteurised milk.

View the comprehensive guidance on enforcement measures in Scotland in the Food Law Code of Practice.

# View the external guidelines

This external guidance should be used together with the guide for use in Scotland provided on these pages.

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Last updated: 21 March 2024

## Version history

### **21 June 2023 - Version 1.0**

- Previously published on the Health Protection Scotland website on 1 September 2014.
  - This is the first publication on the Public Health Scotland website in a new HTML format.
  - There have been no changes to the recommendations.
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