

Changes to National Statistics on TB in Cattle in GB – December 2015

From 11 February to 24 April 2015 Defra, the Welsh Government and the Scottish Government consulted on proposed changes to the content and format of the National Statistics on Incidence of TB in Cattle in GB. The public [consultation](#) was conducted in accordance with the [Official Statistics Code of Practice](#). The [government response](#) to the consultation was published on 12 August 2015.

This note summarises the changes made to the statistical release.

Non-officially TB-free (non-OTF) herds

There are now two data items for non-OTF herds:

Herds not officially TB free at the end of the period due to a bovine TB incident (non OTF herds):

These are herds under movement restrictions at the end of the period shown, as a result of TB test reactors or detection of culture-confirmed lesions of TB during routine meat inspection at the slaughterhouse (confirmed slaughterhouse cases). In the dataset this sheet is labelled 'Disease restricted herds – end'. This data is used as the numerator for the headline statistics on prevalence (see below).

Herds not officially TB free during the period due to a bovine TB incident (non OTF herds): These are herds which were not officially TB-free (i.e. herds under movement restrictions with OTF status suspended or withdrawn) at some point during the period shown, due to a TB incident. A herd with more than one incident in the period will be counted more than once. As herds may be under restrictions for several consecutive calendar months, the monthly figures cannot be added together to describe the total number of individual herds restricted annually. Conversely, some herds counted in this statistic may have been under restrictions at the beginning of the period of interest, but TB-free at the end. In the dataset this sheet is labelled 'Disease restricted herds – during'.

Headline statistics

Instead of the one headline incidence measure presented in the past, two headline statistics are now presented to describe the frequency of the disease in the cattle population: herd incidence and herd prevalence.

- **Herd incidence** is measured as all new herd incidents ('breakdowns') per 100 herd-years at risk. A supplementary measure presents the incidence rate for new herd incidents where OTF status has been withdrawn per 100 herd-years at risk. This measure is explained in detail in a [methodological paper](#).
- **Herd prevalence** is the percentage of all registered herds at the end of the period that were not OTF due to a bTB incident (see above).

A chart in the statistical notice presents the previous herd incidence measure (new OTFW herd incidents per 100 tests on non-OTF herds) alongside the new measure. This will be published for 12 months following the introduction of these changes to allow users to compare the two measures.

Geographical changes

England statistics are now disaggregated by risk area (see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bovine-tb-testing-intervals-2015>):

- High Risk Area (West Midlands, South West of England and part of East Sussex)
- Edge Area (most of Cheshire, parts of the counties of Derbyshire, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire and East Sussex and the whole of Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Hampshire)
- Low Risk Area (North, East and South East of England).

Statistics for Wales have been further disaggregated so that the boundaries are more in line with those of other statistical outputs such as in the APHA [annual surveillance report for Wales](#). This means that the previous county of North/South Powys has been split into North Powys, Mid Powys and South Powys, Dyfed has been split into Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire and Gwynedd has been split into Gwynedd and Anglesey.

Note that whereas other Welsh statistical outputs aggregate West Glamorgan, Mid Glamorgan and South Glamorgan into a single figure for Glamorgans, these have been kept separate to retain continuity with the county boundaries published in National Statistics datasets prior to these changes.

Datasets

The 'headline statistics' dataset contains the headline statistics for herd incidence and herd prevalence, presented for England, Scotland and Wales and the three bTB risk areas of England. It also shows the new herd incidence rate calculation against the previous calculation at a GB level. This is published every quarter.

The 'GB by country' dataset is where the underlying statistics are published. Figures are presented for GB overall and disaggregated for Wales, Scotland and England and the three risk areas of England. It also contains a summary page for each year, and for the most recent 12 month period. This is published every month.

Six regional datasets present statistics at a county level. These are now backdated to 1996, with the exception of the number of herds registered which is not available at a county level before 2011 (when the APHA data system changed from VetNet to Sam). To avoid too many columns of data in each one and for ease of navigation, the datasets are published for Wales, Scotland and four regions of England (North, West Midlands, South East and South West).

Some minor changes made to the presentation of the datasets include:

- Instead of the 'year to date' figures that used to be presented for each area type, figures are presented for the twelve months to the end of the period in question (e.g. the twelve months to end of September 2015 published in December 2015) and for the previous 12 month period (e.g. twelve months to September 2014). This allows two full years' data to be compared including the most recently-published figures.
- GB totals all include figures for a minority of herds and tests for which there is no further geographical information on Sam. This means the GB figure will sometimes be higher than the sum of the figures for England, Scotland and Wales.

Frequency of publication

The full statistical notice, which is the document containing the headline statistics (incidence rate and prevalence), charts, statistical commentary, tables and background information, will be published quarterly. This will be:

- Figures for period ending December – published in March
- Figures for period ending March – published in June
- Figures for period ending June – published in September
- Figures for period ending September – published in December.

In between these quarterly publications, the datasets containing the number of new herd incidents, animals slaughtered, herds under disease restrictions, etc. will continue to be published monthly. This will be accompanied by a very short overview of the most recent trends, comparing the most recent 12 month period with the previous 12 months.

Guidance and methodology

To coincide with these changes and to provide further guidance to users, [several background methodology](#) papers have been updated or published.

Archived files

The datasets published in November 2015, which contained the statistics, have been saved in the '[historic statistics notices](#)' area of the TB statistics collection.