

Animal Health and Welfare Board for England
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To: 1. Minister of State 2. Secretary of State

Date: 11 July 2012

PROPOSED APPROACH TO EU ISSUES ON BOVINE TB (bTB)

1. On 10 July 2012, the Bovine TB Programme team sought the Animal Health and Welfare Board for England's agreement on a proposed approach to securing continued EU approval and funding for the Bovine TB Eradication Plan.
2. The Board agreed the need to seek the European Commission's agreement to the Bovine TB Eradication Plan in the most cost effective and proportionate way possible. It noted that industry stakeholders at recent workshops were supportive of working with the Commission to agree a way forward. The Board also noted that following informal discussion the Programme team was optimistic that its proposals on testing and movement controls for 2013 would be acceptable to the Commission. The Board stated that the TB Eradication Advisory Group (TBEAG) would have a role in advising on the details of future programmes.
3. The Board recommends that you agree the proposed approach.

Background

4. The UK is required to submit to the Commission, the final version of its Bovine TB Eradication Plan for 2012 by the end of July, and for 2013 by 15 September 2012.
5. The Bovine TB Programme team proposed to the Board that:
 - Defra should submit a final version of the 2012 Plan describing the changes already implemented or agreed;
 - Defra should seek the Commission's agreement to the 2013 Plan on two key issues: (i) a new approach to bTB testing in England; and (ii) further tightening of TB movement controls in England where we are not yet complying with EU law;
 - Defra should carry out an informal consultation with key stakeholders over the summer on the tightening of movement controls; and
 - Defra should use the planned stakeholder engagement on future strategic direction on bTB to seek views on a longer-term approach for 2014 and beyond, including exploring the option of 'officially TB-free' regional status for low incidence areas of England.

Michael Seals, Chair of Animal Health and Welfare Board for England