



## Terms and Conditions of the Approval and Operation of a Licensed Finishing Unit

### Licensed Finishing Unit: A TB Restricted Unit in the Low Risk Area of England for the Finishing of Cattle from Multiple Officially Tuberculosis Free Herds

#### Background and Purpose

1. England only - Licensed Finishing Units (LFUs) have been introduced to replace Approved Finishing Units (AFUs) in the Low Risk Areas (LRA) of England only. Previously AFU's without grazing were permitted in the LRA although with limitations on the origin of cattle - animals could only be sourced from premises that were Officially Tuberculosis Free (OTF). In order to differentiate biosecure cattle finishing units in the LRA from the AFUs in the rest of the country and to avoid the misperception that finishing units in the LRA can source high risk cattle from TB restricted herds, AFUs will no longer be permitted in the LRA.
2. The LFU provides an outlet for the finishing of negative testing cattle from (OTF) herds only, under strict biosecurity conditions to mitigate the risk of disseminating *M.bovis* infection to neighbouring cattle herds and local wildlife. This allows LFUs to avoid routine surveillance testing for TB and in many cases breakdown testing in the event of a slaughterhouse case. Cattle may be sourced from multiple OTF premises including any area of England, Scotland and Wales. Imported cattle can move into these units subject to compliance with the specific import requirements.
3. The LFU is approved for cattle only. No other species of animal are permitted within these units.
4. The LFU is a cattle finishing unit only. Unlike AFUs they cannot be approved as rearing units. The LFU is not intended for pregnant animals and no breeding must take place within the unit. There must be a contingency in place to deal with unexpected calves born in the unit.

The conditions of approval and operation of LFUs have been formulated to ensure disease security:

- the unit must be under TB restrictions
- the unit must have an individual permanent CPH number allocated and be registered with the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) on the Cattle Tracing System (CTS)
- the unit must not have a temporary CPH (tCPH) or Temporary Land Association (TLA) registered against its CPH nor must land/premises registered against its CPH be associated temporarily through a TLA or as a tCPH to another CPH

#### Source of Cattle

The risk of importing infection into the low risk TB area must be minimised, and therefore it is a requirement that LFU's can only source cattle from OTF herds, with cattle subject to pre-movement testing when moving from OTF herds on an annual or more frequent testing regime.

Cattle may be sourced from multiple OTF premises including any area of England, Scotland and Wales.

Imported cattle can move into these units subject to compliance with the specific import requirements.

#### Destination of cattle

The only permitted movements of cattle out of the LFU are to slaughter:

- directly under a general licence (TB24h or TB24g)
- via an approved collection centre/slaughter gathering in England for TB restricted cattle under general licence (TB24h)
- directly under a specific licence (TB24) (exceptional circumstances only).
- no testing is generally required for LFUs. However, APHA retain the option to test in exceptional circumstances e.g. if there is extensive evidence of TB identified post-slaughter (high number of slaughterhouse cases, extensive lesions found at post mortem) suspicion of clinical TB cases in animals held in the LFU, etc. The option to test in exceptional circumstances will be informed by a Veterinary Risk Assessment (VRA)
- cattle within the unit are exempt from post movement testing, providing the premovement testing requirements have been met
- imported animals that move directly into an LFU will be exempted from post import TB testing as long as all other TB testing requirements for export purposes have been met
- cattle moved from premises which subsequently have a TB incident will not be traced and/or notified to LFUs. LFUs will consequently accept responsibility for any reduction in value of any carcase following slaughter as a result of TB lesions being disclosed in such cattle.

## Conditions

The conditions listed below are aimed at ensuring that the LFU remains a discrete, self-contained cattle unit clearly isolated from other cattle herds, other livestock and wildlife. The object is to prevent disease spread within the locality of the unit from undetected infection within the unit.

The approval of LFU's can be considered if the proposed premises comply with the following conditions:

- in general can only be approved on an Officially TB Free (OTF) premises. A new CPH cannot be issued or an LFU set up on premises that are under TB02 restrictions
- however consideration can be given to approval of an LFU on a premises that has lost OTF status subject to satisfactory Veterinary Risk Assessment (VRA) and where it complies with the following criteria:
  - where the premises for the proposed unit is an intensive housed fattening unit that only sells animals to slaughter (direct or via an approved collection centre/slaughter gathering) and the origin for the breakdown is recently purchased animals with no evidence of spread within the herd, an LFU can be considered for approval. In all cases the first post breakdown Short Interval Test (SIT) must have been completed in order that a full VRA can be carried out before a decision on approval can be made
  - where disease is believed to be established on the premises, breakdown testing and return to OTF status is required before an LFU can be approved.
- each unit should meet all the criteria required to qualify for a separate CPH
- the boundaries of the unit should be well defined, discrete, effective and secure. There should be separate housing, management, equipment (refer below), machinery (refer below), yards etc. and a double fence with a 3M gap or something that effectively serves the same purpose e.g. a solid wall to a building with no openings or opportunity for leakage of drainings from the unit would be an acceptable part of a boundary
- there must be no opportunity for straying or for nose-to-nose contact with other livestock
- cattle may only move into the unit under licence issued by APHA. No other cattle must have access to the unit at any time
- units must not be co-located on a yard where another herd exists
- multiple units cannot co-exist within the same yarded area but multiple buildings within a yarded area may be acceptable as one single unit

- units must have strict biosecurity with protocols in place for movements of personnel, equipment and vehicles entering and leaving the unit. All such movements must be limited to those essential to the running of the unit
- if personnel, equipment or vehicles are to be used/have access to other cattle outside of the unit, the biosecurity protocol should refer to this
- protocols must also be in place for drainage of effluent and washings from the unit. There must be no drainage of effluent or wash offs from the unit into areas where TB susceptible stock have access
- protocols must include access to feed
- buildings must have sufficient space to allow for the growth of the cattle to be allowed in the unit and a maximum capacity stated in the conditions for approval. It is the responsibility of the owner/operator of the unit to ensure that the welfare of the cattle is not compromised by overcrowding. The number of cattle which the unit can hold must be included on the approval and the owner/operator must have consider contingencies to exclude potential adverse welfare conditions which will be recorded and agreed
- Units must be wildlife proof, either the buildings containing the cattle must be fully wildlife proof or the boundary to the unit must be fully wildlife proof. This can be achieved for example by the use of electric fencing as a boundary around the building(s). The boundaries of the unit must also be livestock proof
- wildlife-proof in this context refers to species of wild mammals that can act as reservoirs of *M. bovis* (e.g. badgers and, potentially, wild deer) and suitable conditions include:
  - sides of the building should not be open, but of a smooth and solid construction (i.e. to prevent wildlife from gaining access to the building) and at least 1.5m high
  - doors should be of smooth and solid construction and at least 1.5m high (solid sheets of metal can be added to a five bar gate)
  - gaps at the sides and under doors and walls should be no greater than 7.5cm and must not be able to be enlarged by digging or chewing
  - where effluent or waste water drains into a soak away ditch, wildlife must not have access and wire or suitable electric fencing should be used to prevent such access. This is to prevent the contamination of the environment and wildlife
  - where electric fencing is to be used at the boundary of the LFU to ensure access to wildlife is denied it is important to note that strands of wire should be at 10, 15, 20 and 30cm above the ground
- equipment should be dedicated, unless:
  - contamination is at a level that can satisfactorily be cleaned using a power wash and/or disinfection
  - any contamination should be dealt with immediately and certainly before contact with other TB susceptible stock
  - contamination will be assessed according to risk and generally shared feed wagons will be acceptable, whilst dung scrapers will not
  - either dedicated outerwear or waterproof clothing must be worn and a protocol provided to demonstrate elimination of risk of disease spread
- a full and effective biosecurity protocol will be required for all shared equipment
- manure will be stacked for a minimum of three weeks on the site of the unit, or at an approved site to which wildlife or other livestock do not have access.
- slurry will be either:

- stored for at least six months and must then be spread a minimum of 10m from the farm boundary or from any land grazed by, or housing used by, any TB susceptible stock (includes sheep, pigs, goats and camelids, farmed or park deer), or
- if not stored for at least 6 months, it must be spread by injection into the ground or onto arable land
- additionally, there will be no access to the treated ground by TB susceptible stock for at least 60 days following slurry spread.

### **Application and Inspection**

- persons seeking approval for an LFU should contact their local APHA office who will provide them with an application form (TB188) and the terms and conditions for approval (TR429). Alternatively these documents can be accessed on GOV.UK
- on receipt of a completed application form and plan of the premises, APHA will assess the application and if the unit appears to meet the criteria for approval, a Veterinary Inspector will visit and inspect the proposed premises
- following a satisfactory inspection report, written confirmation of the approval will be sent (TB430)
- if the unit does not meet all of the conditions required, approval will not be given and APHA will inform you of the reasons
- if approved, a new dedicated CPH must be obtained for the unit although an existing CPH can be considered for use where all the premises under the existing CPH are to be included in the unit. To apply for a CPH number:
  - contact the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) Customer Service Centre (CSC)
  - request a CPH for an LFU and confirm that the application has been recommended by APHA
- if approved the LFU, will be served with a restriction notice (TB02), prohibiting the movement of bovine animals, which will be copied to the relevant Local Authority
- the premises, records of movements, etc. will be subject to inspections periodically (which may be unannounced) and, as a minimum, on an annual basis, by APHA
- failure to comply with any of the conditions (including failure to complete any testing that may be required)) will result in withdrawal of the approval. If approval is revoked, TB02 movement restrictions will continue to operate until Officially TB free (OTF) status can be achieved.

### **Action in the event of a TB incident in the Licensed Finishing Unit**

The LFU will follow the standard APHA procedures for compensation, removal and post-mortem of reactors and Direct Contacts (DC's). APHA offices will continue to arrange retest of Inconclusive Reactors (IRs). Operators have, however, the option to privately slaughter IRs without the need for further testing.

All animals within a LFU are destined for slaughter only and have no breeding potential. Therefore for the purposes of TB valuation, any cattle located within a LFU are classed as commercial type and compensation is payable according to the relevant non-pedigree valuation table.

Further to a breakdown in the unit:

- no breakdown testing will be carried out except in exceptional circumstances e.g. if there is extensive evidence of TB identified post-slaughter, suspicion of clinical TB cases in animals held in the LFU. The option to test in exceptional circumstances will be informed by a veterinary risk assessment that will take into account the local disease situation and any other relevant factors

- the owner/operator may wish to depopulate the LFU rather than carrying out a testing programme. In these cases the LFU must be cleansed and disinfected as stated in the conditions on the Notice (BT05). This will be inspected, before restocking is approved
- the Veterinary Head of Field Delivery (VHoFD) may stop the movement of cattle onto the LFU if a severe TB incident is disclosed in the unit as a whole or in a part of it.

### **Action on the farm of origin when animals have been consigned to an LFU**

- slaughterhouse cases from LFUs will be routinely back traced to the farm of origin where it may be necessary to instigate check testing for the origin herd.

### **Re-gaining Officially TB free (OTF) status (lifting TB restrictions on the LFU)**

- if the operator decides to cease functioning as a LFU, they must notify the VHoFD in writing of the intention to seek OTF status
- the requirement to undertake trace testing will recommence immediately from the moment the LFU seeks to regain OTF status
- LFUs can regain OTF status following either by:
  - total destocking and Cleansing and Disinfection of the unit (C&D). As soon as the unit is empty, C&D must be carried out as per the conditions stated on the C&D notice (BT05). Disinfection will have to be confirmed as satisfactory on inspection by a veterinary inspector or other authorised officer or
  - subject to a satisfactory VRA, a testing regime can be carried out. Two consecutive tests at severe interpretation with negative results will be required
- when all of these conditions are satisfied OTF status will be achieved and a withdrawal notice (TB10) can be issued. Restocking with livestock will then be permitted
- where the option to test is implemented, further movements on can be permitted before OTF status is regained subject to satisfactory VRA. A specific licence will be required if these movements are permitted
- in all cases, restrictions will remain on manure/slurry until the treatment prescribed in the general conditions listed above has been completed
- once OTF status is regained, the operator must reapply in the normal way if they wish to reinstate the LFU.

APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Food Standards Agency to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.