

# **TB130(E) Terms and conditions of the approval and operation of an Approved Finishing Unit without grazing**

**September 2024**

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# Approved Finishing Unit (AFU): to allow the purchase of TB restricted cattle from multiple sources for rearing, fattening or finishing (without grazing)

## Background and purpose

1. AFUs were introduced to provide an outlet for the rearing, fattening and/or finishing of clear tested cattle from TB restricted holdings. They can also source cattle from unrestricted premises. Cattle may be sourced from multiple premises and from any area of England, Scotland and Wales.
2. AFUs are approved by the Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA).
3. AFUs cannot be approved in the Low Risk Area (LRA) of England. The Licensed Finishing Unit (LFU) has replaced the AFU in the LRA.
4. AFUs are approved for cattle only. No other animal species are permitted within these units.
5. AFUs are not intended for milk production nor for pregnant animals and no breeding must take place in these units. Written contingencies must be in place for any calves born unexpectedly in an AFU as part of the conditions for the approval.
6. The conditions of approval and operation of AFUs without grazing have been formulated to ensure disease security:
  - the unit must be under TB movement restrictions
  - cattle must remain housed at all times
  - cattle from several different sources (including from TB restricted premises) will be present
  - turnover of animals will be high
  - the unit must always comply with strict biosecurity conditions
  - the unit must have an individual County Parish Holding (CPH) number allocated and be registered as an AFU 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 it nor can land or premises registered to an AFU be associated temporarily through a TLA or as a tCPH to another CPH
  - in England, AFUs without grazing may be approved in the High Risk Area (HRA) and Edge Area only.
7. AFUs may take cattle from multiple herds under TB restrictions, it is vital that the AFU complies at all times with the approval conditions.

## Source of cattle

1. AFUs without grazing may source the following cattle:
  - from a TB restricted premises (not an AFU) directly, under the authority of a movement licence (TB16/TB16e/TB16e(Welsh)) or via an approved TB

dedicated sale (“orange market”) in England and Wales, under licence (TB16b/TB16e/TB16e (Welsh)). Movements must comply with the conditions of this licence and cattle must have had a negative tuberculin test within the preceding 90 days of the movement (except calves under 42 days of age)

- **in England only**, from an on farm herd dispersal sale under the authority of a movement licence (TB16/TB16e/TB16e(Welsh)). Cattle from a herd dispersal sale must have had a negative tuberculin test within the preceding 90 days of the movement (except calves under 42 days of age)
- from another AFU/AFUE in England or Wales, directly under licence (TB16/TB16e/TB16e (Welsh)) or via an approved TB dedicated sale (“orange market”) under licence (TB16b/TB16e/TB16e (Welsh)) without the requirement for a pre-movement TB test provided that no outstanding non-compliance was identified at the last annual APHA audit of both the origin and destination AFUs. If there is any unresolved non-compliance, pre-movement testing will still apply
- from herds not restricted for TB under the authority of a movement licence (TB15a):
  - without the requirement for a pre-movement test
  - that are exempt from pre-movement testing
  - that have been pre-movement tested
- resolved Inconclusive Reactors (IRs) restricted for life from premises not restricted for TB, under the general licence on GOV.UK, either direct from the farm or via a TB dedicated sale:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-licence-for-the-movement-of-resolved-inconclusive-reactor-cattle-to-slaughter>

2. All movement requests will be subject to a risk assessment by APHA and those considered to be high risk will be refused.
3. If a TB incident is identified at the farm of origin of cattle in the AFU, the cattle will not be traced and/or notified to the AFU. Post-import testing of imported cattle entering an AFU is not required Regular testing of cattle in the AFU is not required. AFU operators 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.

## Destination of cattle

1. After finishing at the AFU, cattle can leave for slaughter:
  - directly under general licence (TB24g)
  - via an approved TB slaughter gathering in England for TB restricted cattle under general licence (TB24h), except in the LRA of England
2. via an approved TB slaughter gathering in Wales for TB restricted cattle under licence (TB24h)The movement of cattle from an AFU directly to another AFU or AFUE in England or Wales may be allowed under licence (TB16/TB16e/TB16e(Welsh)).
3. Cattle can also move to an Approved TB Dedicated Sale (“orange” market) in England or Wales under the authority of a movement licence (TB16b/TB16b(Welsh)/TB16e/TB16e(Welsh)). From the TB Dedicated Sale the cattle can be moved on under licence directly to slaughter or to another AFU in England and Wales or an AFUE in England.

4. Cattle moving off an AFU to an AFU/AFUE, or to a TB Dedicated Sale in England and Wales do not require a clear pre-movement test, unless the AFU has been informed by APHA that they are non-compliant with the conditions of the approval (see testing below).

## TB testing on Approved Finishing Units without grazing

1. No routine surveillance TB testing is required in AFUs without grazing. However, APHA retains the option to test 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 AFU. This would be informed by a veterinary risk assessment (VRA) that would consider the local disease situation and any other relevant factors. If the decision is taken to test, moves to approved TB slaughter gatherings without a negative skin test within the previous 90 days would not be permitted until testing at the AFU is completed.
2. Cattle moved between AFUs are not required to have a pre-movement test for TB provided that no outstanding non-compliance was identified at the last annual APHA audit of both the origin and destination AFUs. If there is any unresolved non-compliance, pre-movement testing will still apply.
3. No tracing tests will be undertaken of animals moved to AFUs where the source herd subsequently has a TB incident.
4. No post-import testing will be required for cattle imported into the AFU as long as all other conditions for import have been met.

## Conditions

1. The conditions listed below are aimed at ensuring that the AFU remains a discrete, self-contained cattle unit clearly isolated from other cattle, other livestock and wildlife. The objective is to prevent disease spread within the locality of the unit from undetected infection within the unit.
2. Approval of AFUs without grazing can be considered if the proposed premises complies with the following conditions:
  - in general can only be approved on an Officially Tuberculosis Free (OTF premises)
  - in England consideration can be given to approval of an AFU without grazing on a premises that has lost OTF status subject to satisfactory 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 TB collection centre/slaughter gathering) and the origin for the breakdown is recently purchased animals with no evidence of spread within the herd, an AFU can be considered for approval. In all cases the first post-breakdown Short Interval Test (SIT) must have been completed in order that a 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 AFU can be approved

3. Each unit must meet all the criteria required to qualify for a separate CPH.
4. The boundary of the unit must be well defined, discrete, effective and secure with a dedicated entrance/exit. There must be separate housing, management, equipment (refer below), machinery (refer below), yards etc. from other farm activities/enterprises.
5. The unit must be livestock proof with no opportunity for straying or for nose-to-nose contact with other livestock. There must be a solid barrier (e.g. a solid wall) or a distance separation of at least three metres between cattle in the unit and any livestock outside the unit.
6. Cattle may only move into the unit under licence issued by APHA. No other cattle or other livestock, horses or poultry may have access to the unit at any time.
7. Units must not be co-located on a yard where another herd exist including any other TB unit.
8. Multiple units i.e. each unit with a separate CPH, cannot co-exist within the same yarded area but multiple buildings within a yarded area may be acceptable as one single unit.
9. No activities unrelated to the operation of the unit are allowed within the boundary of the unit e.g. residential dwelling, storage of lorries/machinery, livery yard, farm shop, farm workshop.
10. There must be no public access into or through the unit e.g. public footpath, bridleway.
11. Units must have strict biosecurity with written protocols detailing controls for preventing disease transmission via personnel, equipment and vehicles entering and leaving the unit. All such movements must be limited to those essential to the running of the unit.
12. If personnel, equipment or vehicles are to be used/have access to other cattle outside of the unit, the written biosecurity protocol should refer to this.
13. There must be no drainage of effluent or wash offs from the unit into areas accessible to livestock or wildlife. Written protocols must be in place for drainage of effluent and washings from the unit.
14. Buildings must have sufficient space to allow for growth of the cattle 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 comfortably hold must be included on the approval and the owner/operator must have written contingencies to manage potential adverse welfare conditions, which must be recorded and agreed as part of the approval.
15. Units must be fully wildlife proof. This can be achieved by ensuring the individual buildings and cattle yards are wildlife-proof or the boundary of the unit is wildlife proof.
16. **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). Badgers can potentially climb a smooth vertical barrier that is less than 1.5m high and squeeze through holes and gaps greater than 7.5cm. Suitable conditions include:
  - sides of the building (or the perimeter of the AFU if the AFU has multiple buildings within a perimeter) should not be open, but of a smooth and solid

construction (i.e. to prevent wildlife from gaining access) and a minimum of 1.5m high.

- gates/doors must have a smooth and solid construction (i.e. not to allow wildlife to get a purchase) and a minimum of 1.5m high (solid sheets of metal can be added to the outside of a five bar gate)
- gate latches must not create a hole in sheeting greater than 7.5 cm or must otherwise be adapted to prevent badgers access
- gaps in the walls and at the sides and under doors and gates must 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 soakaway ditch, wildlife and livestock must not have access and suitable fencing should be used to prevent such access. This is to prevent the contamination of the environment and wildlife
- where **electric fencing** is used to deny access to wildlife, the following points must be observed:
  - fence strands must be taut to prevent badgers pushing between them
  - electric fencing must be continuously powered by a mains energiser to provide at least 4-6kV at the farthest point of the fence
  - the system must be adequately earthed
  - minimum of four strands of wire set at 10, 15, 20 and 30cm above the ground to prevent access by badgers
  - maintenance is essential to make sure that electric fences are working properly. Regular inspections should be made, and recorded, to check the fence condition, fence voltage and ensure conducting wires are kept clear of vegetation unless erected over a hard surface, e.g. hardcore or concrete
  - mesh alone (tornado-type fence) is not accepted as a suitable barrier for preventing badger access

17. Cattle feed must be inaccessible to wildlife e.g. badgers. Written protocol must be in place for excluding access to cattle feed by wildlife.

18. Equipment and machinery should be dedicated, unless:

- contamination is at a level that can satisfactorily be cleaned using a power wash and disinfection
- any contamination should be dealt with immediately and before contact with other TB susceptible livestock
- contamination is assessed according to risk and generally shared feed wagons may be acceptable, whilst dung scrapers are not
- a full and effective written biosecurity protocol must be in place for all shared equipment and machinery
- there must be adequate means to cleanse and disinfect vehicles and machinery moving to and from the unit, including to remove gross contamination before disinfection.

19. Dedicated outerwear or disinfectable, waterproof clothing and footwear must be worn and a written protocol must be in place to demonstrate how elimination of risk of disease is achieved. There must be adequate facilities to cleanse and disinfect protective clothing, including the removal of gross contamination before disinfection, e.g. boot dip and boot brush.

20. A disinfectant approved for use against Tuberculosis under The Diseases of Animals (Approved Disinfectants) (England) Order 2007 must be used at the correct dilution rate.

21. There must be adequate, dedicated TB testing facilities within the unit. As a minimum this should incorporate:
  - a crush
  - a sufficiently long race
  - a collecting yard
22. Manure should be stacked for a minimum of three weeks on the unit, or at an approved site to which wildlife or other livestock do not have access.
23. Slurry should either be:
  - stored for at least six months from the last addition 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
  - spread by injection into the ground if six month storage is not possible
20. Additionally, there must be no access to the treated ground by TB susceptible stock for at least 60 days following slurry and manure spreading regardless of whether the slurry was applied to the surface of the land or injected into the ground.
21. A written biosecurity protocol must be in place for the management of slurry/manure and records must be kept of all locations and dates of manure/slurry spreading.
22. Movements of cattle into and out of the unit must be reported within the prescribed timescales.

## Application and inspection

1. An application form for the approval and operation of an AFU can be downloaded from GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/approved-finishing-units-for-cattle-application> or alternatively can be provided by APHA on request
2. On receipt of a completed application form with a plan of the premises to be approved and the appropriate biosecurity protocols, APHA will assess the application and if the unit appears to meet the criteria for approval, a Veterinary Inspector (VI) will visit and inspect the proposed premises.
3. Following a satisfactory inspection report, written confirmation of the approval will be sent to the applicant. The approval will contain the conditions for operation of the unit.
4. If the unit does not meet all of the conditions required, approval will not be given and APHA will inform the applicant of the reasons.
5. If approved, a new dedicated CPH will be obtained by APHA 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.
6. If approved, the AFU will be served with a restriction notice (TB02), prohibiting the movement of bovine animals, which will be copied to the relevant Local Authority (LA)
7. The premises, records of movements, etc. will be subject to inspections by APHA, which may be unannounced.
8. Failure to comply with any of the conditions set out in the approval (including failure to complete any testing that may be required) may result in revocation of the

approval. If approval is revoked, movement restrictions (TB02) will continue to operate until the unit is depopulated and thoroughly cleansed and disinfected (C&D), with a satisfactory inspection of C&D by APHA before OTF status can be achieved.

9. The operator must notify APHA (<mailto:CSCTBUnits@apha.gov.uk> in England) if there is a change of management or the unit undergoes a change of structure or boundary.
10. AFUs are commercial enterprises and their owners/operators are best placed to promote their commercial activities. Upon approval of a holding as an AFU, the owners should be encouraged to register their interest with local farming organisations and advertise on the web, farming press, etc. However, it is not the role of APHA to publicise or give out the details of a particular AFU to farmers affected by TB restrictions. It is for industry stakeholders to update their members on the availability of AFUs for TB restricted cattle.
11. APHA will list all approved premises on GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/finishing-units-for-cattle-approved-premises/approved-finishing-units-england-and-wales> and approved AFUs are included in ibTB at: [ibTB - Mapping bovine TB \(bTB\) in England and Wales](#)

## Action in the event of a TB incident in the Approved Finishing Unit without grazing

1. AFUs are subject to the standard APHA procedures for compensation, removal and post-mortem of reactors. APHA will continue to arrange retest of IRs, however operators have the option to privately slaughter IRs without the need for further testing.
2. 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 or suspicion of clinical TB cases in animals held in the AFU. This will be informed by a VRA that will consider the local disease situation and any other relevant factors
  - the owner/operator may wish to depopulate the AFU rather than completing a testing programme. In these cases the AFU must be C&D as stated in the conditions on the C&D Notice (BT05). This will be inspected by APHA before restocking is approved
  - the Veterinary Head of Field Delivery (VHoFD) may stop the movement of cattle onto the AFU 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 AFU

1. Slaughterhouse cases from AFUs will be routinely back traced to the farm of origin and any implications for management of the breakdown at the farm of origin need to be considered.
2. If the supplying herd has passed two 60 day tests since the movement, then normally no action would be required, but the APHA Veterinarian may consider the need to instigate further check tests.

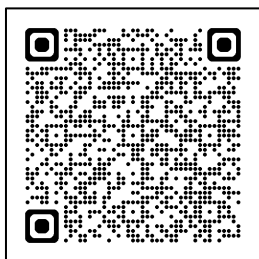
## Premises of origin in Wales only

1. Except where the only animals sent to the AFU are under 90 days old when moved, the movement of TB restricted cattle to an AFU is only permitted when the herd of origin is due two further Short Interval tests.

## Re-gaining Officially TB Free (OTF) Status (Lifting TB Restrictions on the AFU)

1. If the operator wants the unit to regain OTF status the following are necessary before restrictions can be withdrawn:

- they must notify the VHoFD of the intention to regain OTF status
- the intake of cattle must cease
- the requirement to undertake trace testing will recommence from the moment an AFU seeks to regain OTF status
- all cattle on the unit must be sent for slaughter as and when ready for slaughter, or they can be licensed to another AFU/AFUE either directly or via a TB dedicated sale
- once depopulated, the unit must be cleansed and disinfected as per the conditions on the back of the Notice Requiring Cleansing and Disinfection (BT05):  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tb-restricted-cattle-declare-cleansing-and-disinfection-in-england>



- manure and slurry must be treated as prescribed in the conditions listed above
- cleansing and disinfection must be confirmed as satisfactory on inspection by APHA.

2. 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.



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