

Introduction

Hello from all at Biobest!

With the lengthening days and warmer temperatures we all have a spring in our step at Biobest. We welcome the news that the ban on live exports has been lifted. This will hopefully give the agriculture industry a boost and reward all of you who have worked hard towards achieving and maintaining a high health status. As a response to this we have dedicated this newsletter to information on the cattle health status of the rest of Europe and some information on the entry requirements.

The current position is that the VLA is the only laboratory recognised by DEFRA for laboratory testing for export purposes. Clearly this is an unsatisfactory situation which we are working hard to resolve. Over the next 6 months we should receive the ISO 9000/17025 quality standard. This should assist us in our efforts to ensure DEFRA recognise us as an approved laboratory for testing for export – we will keep you posted.

Helen, and the Herdcare team.

Herdcare and IBR Export Guarantees

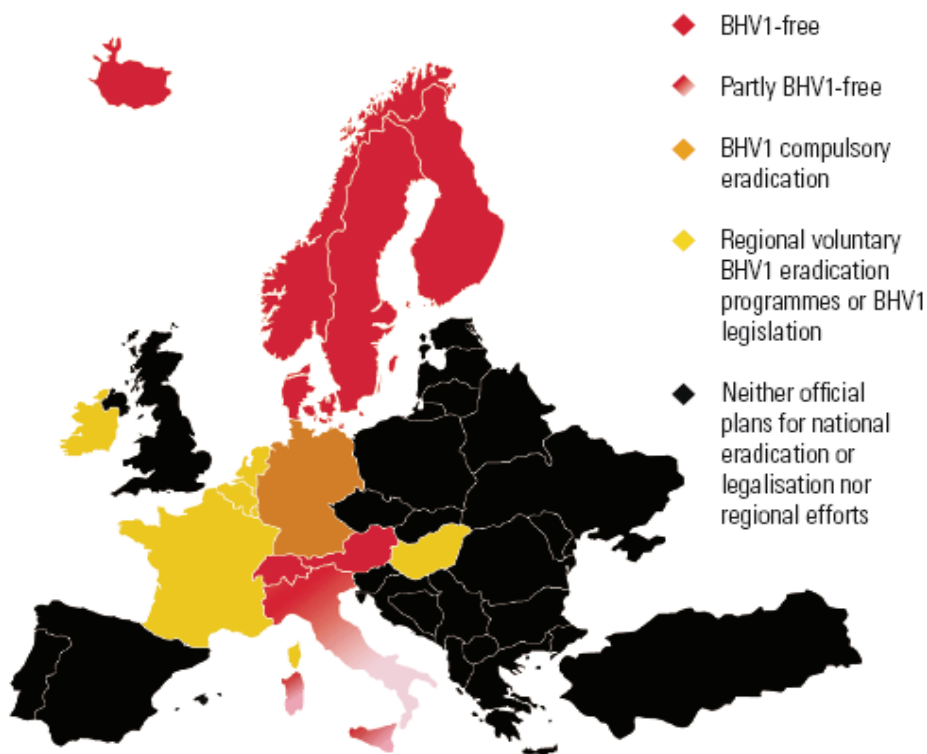
IBR is endemic in the UK. Most herds are infected to some degree, so meeting the IBR regulations will be difficult unless care has been and is taken to maintain good health status. Biobest currently has over 90 herds Accredited free of IBR; these herds will pass the IBR export tests imposed.

Herds accredited for other diseases, and the 49 member herds undergoing IBR Screening and Eradication, will already have good biosecurity in place and are therefore more likely to have an improved IBR status over untested herds.

IBR Regulations for Export to Europe

Due to the export ban being lifted in the UK, it is important that cattle breeders wanting to export live animals from the UK are aware of the IBR restrictions imposed in the EU. Cattle to be exported to any destination must be free of tuberculosis, brucellosis and leucosis. In addition to this, Denmark Austria, Finland, Germany and the Bolzano Province of Italy require additional guarantees for IBR.

As shown in the map below Norway, Sweden, Finland,



IBR status of European Countries

Figure and regulation information courtesy of Pfizer Animal Health

Denmark, Switzerland, Austria and Italy (Bolzano province) are all IBR free.

Regulations for importation of cattle into these countries are as follows:

- a) There must be no evidence of IBR on the holding for at least 12 months.
- b) Animals must be isolated for 30 days and free of clinical signs.
- c) Animals must be tested after 21 days in isolation and be free of IBR antibodies.
- d) Animals must not be vaccinated.

Germany has adopted a compulsory eradication policy, based on marker vaccines, diagnostics and culling.

Regulations for importation of cattle into Germany are as follows:

- a) There must be no evidence of IBR on the holding for at least 12 months.
 - b) Animals must be isolated for 30 days and free of clinical signs.
 - c) Animals must be tested after 21 days in isolation and be free of IBR gE antibodies (if vaccinated), or IBR antibodies (if unvaccinated).
- France, Belgium and the Netherlands have voluntary eradication schemes. The Netherlands and Belgium have now banned conventional IBR vaccines. There

are no formal IBR restrictions for the importation of live animals into these countries.

Ireland and the UK do not have any formal eradication schemes. Ireland has now banned the use of conventional IBR vaccines.

For further information visit the NBA website:

www.nationalbeefassociation.co.uk

IBR Marker Vaccines

There has recently been increased emphasis on the use of IBR marker vaccines. They are advantageous over conventional IBR vaccines as vaccinated animals can be differentiated from those that have been exposed to the virus. In these vaccines a change is made to the envelope proteins: the glycoprotein 'E' (gE) has been de-

leted. This does not affect the vaccine's ability to stimulate immunity in the animal. Marker vaccinated animals test positive by the conventional IBR ELISA, but negative for gE antibodies in the gE specific ELISA.

As there are no regional or national IBR eradication schemes in the UK, herds that are free from IBR will rarely be surrounded by herds of similar status and, due to the highly infectious nature of the disease these animals will be highly susceptible to infection. Farmers wanting to protect their herds against IBR can still gain IBR accreditation if animals are vaccinated with the marker vaccine. These animals are eligible to be exported to Germany but cannot currently be exported to the IBR free countries.

