

Brucellosis

AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

1. Brucellosis

- IFA has secured the removal of 50% of suckler herds from the annual brucellosis-testing requirement in 2011, a move that is worth €2.5m in direct savings for suckler farmers.
- With the removal of 50% of suckler herds from the annual blood test requirement the total in direct savings for farmers is €7.5m annually when the changes in 2009 and 2010 are included.
- It is over 4 years since there was a brucellosis case in Ireland and the costs associated with this disease must continue to be removed in a phased and appropriate manner.
- Removing 50% of suckler herds from the annual blood test requirement aligns the controls and costs associated with testing charges for suckler farmers with those already being availed of by dairy farmers since the beginning of this year.
- While there remains a threat from the situation in Northern Ireland, maintaining the pre-movement test, continuing with the milk ring test and the cull cow monitoring in factories combined with testing 50% of suckler and dairy herds exceeds the minimum requirements laid down by the commission to maintain our official brucellosis free status. Along with these controls farmers along the border continue to have their animals tested twice a year as a further precaution.
- It is vital we remain vigilant at all times to avoid reintroduction of the disease and it is strongly advised to only purchase animals from reputable sources.

2. BVD

- IFA are leading in the establishment of a BVD Eradication programme that will have the support of farmers and achieve the objective of eradicating BVD. Expert speakers have been organised to attend county executive meetings over the coming months to raise awareness of the disease and assist in establishing the best approach to deal with the issue. AHI will launch a consultation document on 30th November.

3. Separate Herd No. Issue

- Following a number of meetings between IFA and the Department of Agriculture, significant changes have been secured to the separate herd number proposals for distant land fragments. The new arrangement represents a major improvement on the original proposal. The new approach is based on the farmer's declaration regarding the use of the distant land fragment.
- With the key amendments being that
 1. Where a farmer is frequently moving animals between the fragments
 - Or
 2. Where the farmer frequently inspects the animals on the distant fragment**A second herd number will not be issued.**
- Some farmers will be issued with separate herd numbers and issues of concern will have to be addressed as they arise. The Department of Agriculture anticipate less than 200 farmers will be affected by the amended proposal and these will mainly be where the distance between the land fragments is significant.

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16th November 2010