



IFA SUBMISSION TO ANIMAL HEALTH IRELAND REGARDING A NATIONAL BVD ERADICATION PROGRAMME

In order to provide farmers with the necessary support and guidance to eliminate BVD from their farms and for Ireland to maintain its status as a leading food producing country it is important we have a national BVD Eradication Programme.

The programme should take account of a number of key issues in order to achieve the objective of BVD eradication in a timely and cost effective manner.

1. The programme should have identifiable achievable targets including a completion date for national eradication.
2. The programme should be available on a voluntary participation basis to all farmers for 2012.
3. With the advances in testing methods for BVD, veterinary involvement should not be required in the Programme.
4. Producers should have the option of ordering the national identification tag with the capability of taking the ear-notch sample for testing.
5. A reduction in current testing charges must be achieved and Department of Agriculture support should be available towards any additional costs associated with the ear-notch tag and the BVD test in order to ensure the Programme is cost effective and adopted widely by farmers.
6. The Department of Agriculture should provide an incentive to farmers towards the cost of disposal of PI animals provided disposal takes place within an agreed timeframe of receipt of results.
7. Only laboratories which are accredited to recognised standards should be used.
8. The programme should ensure:
 - all test results are returned to the herd-owner within a minimum agreed time frame
 - all test results are returned in a standard certifying format allowing the farmer to declare the status of his animal at sale time
 - the facility for the reassessment of samples at the request of the herd-owner is available
 - all farmers are provided with detailed information of the costs of BVD on their farm and of the benefits of eradicating it, including the options available in dealing with a PI animal and the necessary follow up checks to achieve eradication

- any one sub-sector is not exposed to a disproportionate level of cost burden in achieving eradication and assistance is provided where the welfare of the animal requires the replacement of a calf removed as a PI
9. In advance of the programme start date a major awareness campaign should be undertaken with farmers from various farm sizes and enterprises highlighting the benefits of eradicating BVD from their farms.
 10. The programme should be flexible in order to allow issues that arise be dealt with and incorporated into the programme.
 11. The programme should be reviewed in full after 6 months in order to establish the appropriate approach and policy for subsequent years.