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25 August 2009

To Official Veterinarians on TB and Large Animal Export Panels (1a,1h,1j,1p)

Dear Colleague,

REVISION OF THE CURRENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR TUBERCULIN TESTING OF BOVINE ANIMALS EXPORTED FROM GREAT BRITAIN (GB) TO OTHER EU MEMBER STATES (MSs)

1. I am writing to inform you that the instructions for tuberculin testing of bovine animals (cattle, bison and buffalo) for intra-community trade are to change with effect from 7 September 2009. From that date, bovine animals intended for intra-Community trade will have to be subjected to a stricter ('intra-Community trade') interpretation of the tuberculin test. Official Veterinarians **must ensure that any bovine animals tested on or after 07/09/2009 for intra-Community trade are subjected to the 'intra-Community trade' interpretation in paragraph 2 below.**
2. The normal comparative intradermal test must continue to be applied. However, **only the bovine reaction should be considered** when interpreting the test results in bovine animals intended for intra-Community trade. Those animals showing an increase in the skin fold thickness greater than 2 mm or the presence of oedema 72 hours after tuberculin injection (i.e. a positive bovine reaction) will not be eligible for intra-Community trade, and should not be so certified. This interpretation is referred to as the 'intra-Community trade' interpretation in this letter, and is in line with Community legislation (Council Directive 64/432/EEC – point 2.2.5.3.4 in Annex B refers).
3. The avian reaction must be ignored for the purposes of intra-Community trade, but it will have to be taken into account (and recorded on the tuberculosis test chart) to assess whether any restrictions under national requirements are necessary, for which the standard test interpretation will be used.
4. If any of the animals subjected to tuberculin test for intra-Community trade is deemed to be a reactor or an inconclusive reactor (IR) according to the standard test interpretation, none of the other animals on the holding can be certified for intra-Community trade. This is because the holding is no longer considered officially tuberculosis free (OTF). The OV must serve the usual (TB2) restriction notice and immediately notify the local Animal Health office of these results. However, if no reactors or IRs according to the standard test interpretation are detected, then all the other animals tested in the batch on the holding which pass the 'intra-Community trade' interpretation can be certified for intra-Community trade.
5. The notes for guidance (NFG) for the relevant certificate will be revised accordingly and the Defra website updated.
6. This change applies only to exports to EU member states, and does not affect Third Country exports.
7. There is no change in the rules on which categories of animals (breeding and production) or ages of animals (over 42 days) need to be tested for intra-community trade.
8. Full details are given in the Customer Information Note CIN API/09/82, which has been published on the Defra website. A copy of the CIN is attached.
9. If you have any queries on the export certification aspects of this change, please contact Central Operations for Exports, Carlisle, tel 01228 403600. Any queries on general aspects of tuberculin testing, restriction notices, etc should be directed to your local Animal Health Office.

Yours faithfully,

Neil Twiddy

Veterinary Officer, Central Operations Unit for Exports.

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