

Housing BVD Positive Animals - APHA Guidance

Structural and Biosecurity requirements for housing in isolation Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) virus positive animals under The BVD (Scotland) Order 2019 (as amended).

Principles

1. The conditions listed below are aimed at ensuring that the BVD virus positive isolation facility remains a discrete, self-contained cattle unit clearly isolated from the rest of the herd in the holding to prevent the spread of BVD virus without causing an overwhelming burden for the rest of the farming enterprise.
2. A building or an indoor pen in a farm holding is considered designated as a BVD virus positive animal isolation facility continuously from the point in time when a bovine animal, reported by the approved BVD laboratory as being BVD virus positive, is housed in the isolation facility until the facility is emptied of BVD positive animals and cleansing and disinfection using Defra approved disinfectants at the appropriate concentration of the facility is complete.
3. The keeper is strongly encouraged to produce a written biosecurity plan. The plan should detail how the following rules will be met, along with the location of facilities, equipment and materials for cleansing and disinfection of vehicles, equipment, clothing and footwear.
4. Only Defra approved disinfectants at the appropriate concentration must be used for cleansing and disinfection activities specifically required by this guidance. A list of approved disinfectants is available on GOV.UK: http://disinfectants.defra.gov.uk/DisinfectantsExternal/Default.aspx?Module=ApprovalsList_SI
5. The welfare of BVD virus positive animal must not be undermined by the requirements of being under isolation.

Structure

1. BVD virus positive isolation facilities must be located within the confines of a building. It is not permissible to isolate BVD positive animals outdoors.
2. The facilities used to isolate BVD virus positive animals must be built and maintained in a way that physically prevents nose-to-nose contact with other bovine animals.
3. There must be no opportunity for straying or for nose-to-nose contact with other livestock.
4. The boundaries of the BVD virus positive isolation facility must be:
 - well defined
 - discrete
 - effective
 - secure
5. The infrastructure must be suitable for housing bovine animals.
6. Preferably, a BVD virus positive isolation facility is located in a building which is separate from others on the holding, however, a BVD virus positive isolation facility within a building holding other BVD virus negative animals is admissible provided that:
 - sufficiently effective barriers are in place to prevent nose-to-nose contact between isolated and non-isolated animals present in the same building. Such barriers include:
 - high solid partition between pens with no openings or opportunity for leakage of effluent/manure out of the isolation facility
 - double fencing with a 3 metre minimum gap
 - some other barrier(s) that effectively achieve the same effect as the examples above.
 - if the building is used for storage of machinery/equipment, feed or bedding that is intended for use on the main holding, animals within the isolation facility must not be able to make direct contact with that machinery/equipment, feed or bedding
7. The BVD virus positive isolation facility must have a dedicated access for effluent/manure management, feeding/watering and welfare/handling arrangements.

8. Facilities must be available for hand washing/cleaning.

Biosecurity

1. If, for welfare reasons, the option of isolating a BVD virus positive animal with other bovine animals is taken (refer to Welfare section below), then the minimum number of bovine animals must be used in order to achieve the safeguard of the welfare of BVD virus positive animals.
2. For practical and disease control purposes, the 'minimum number of bovine animals' means by order of preference from a disease control point of view:
 - BVD virus positive animals only
 - no more than two animals, where the co-habiting animal is a BVD virus negative animal must be either serologically positive for BVD virus or vaccinated with a licenced BVD vaccine prior to entry to the isolation facility and must not pose a risk of further vertical spread of BVD virus and/or generation of PI animals (i.e. no naïve in-calf females, breeding bulls or bull calves approaching puberty intended for breeding are allowable as co-habiting BVD virus negative animals)
 - in extremely exceptional circumstances more than two cattle where one or more of the co-habiting animals are BVD virus negative may be allowed, but only after careful veterinary assessment of the particular circumstances surrounding each individual case and approval by APHA. Regardless of the circumstances that surround such exceptional cases, co-habiting BVD virus negative animals must be either serologically positive for BVD virus or vaccinated with a licenced BVD vaccine prior to entry to the isolation facility and must not pose a risk of further vertical spread of BVD virus and/or generation of PI animals (i.e. no in-calf females, breeding bulls or bull calves approaching puberty intended for breeding are allowable as co-habiting BVD virus negative animals)
3. No intentional breeding of animals kept under isolation is permissible and the owner/keeper of the animals under isolation must take appropriate steps to avoid breeding from animals under isolation.
4. Once a bovine animal is reported by the approved BVD laboratory as being BVD virus positive, it must be moved directly into BVD virus positive isolation facility within the same holding and remain there until it dies, is killed on farm, sent directly to an abattoir or further testing by an approved BVD laboratory confirms the animals as being BVD virus negative.
5. The only permissible movements of a live BVD virus positive animal out of a BVD virus positive isolation facility are:
 - direct for slaughter
 - for milking with immediate return to the isolation building or
 - veterinary treatment, which must be licensed by APHA if the treatment is taking place at a different location
 - refer to Permitted Movements Conditions section below for further guidance
6. Any person entering a BVD virus positive isolation facility must wear footwear and clothing that is appropriate for the work being carried out. Footwear and clothing must either be dedicated for use in the BVD virus positive isolation facility or be cleansed and disinfected using Defra approved disinfectants at the appropriate concentration before leaving a BVD virus positive isolation facility.
7. Milk from BVD virus positive animals in a BVD virus positive isolation facility can be sold for human consumption in the normal way. Refer to 'Permitted Movements Conditions and Machinery and Equipment sections below for further guidance:
 - however, if the milk collected from a BVD virus positive isolation facility at any point becomes no longer intended for human consumption, then that milk and any other product of animal origin with which it is mixed (e.g. a bulk milk tank) must be disposed as a Category 2 Animal By-Product
 - **Note:** none of the exemptions usually applied to animal by-products disposed on farm of origin are applicable to animal by-products arising from a BVD virus positive isolation facility therefore exemptions for feeding discarded milk to calves on farm of origin and spread to land on farm of origin without grazing ban **do not** apply to any milk mixed with milk derived from BVD virus positive animals
8. Any person entering a BVD virus positive isolation facility must wash/clean their hands before leaving a BVD virus positive isolation facility.
9. Appropriate signage must be displayed when a BVD virus positive isolation facility is in use so that farm staff and visitors know to follow the required biosecurity procedures.

Machinery and Equipment

1. Preferably, machinery and/or equipment should be dedicated for exclusive use and remains within a BVD virus positive isolation facility for the entire period that the facility is designated as such. However:
 - machinery and/or equipment can be brought into a BVD virus positive isolation facility at any time
 - it is admissible for machinery and/or equipment to leave a BVD virus positive isolation facility provided it is thoroughly cleansed and disinfected using Defra approved disinfectants at the appropriate concentration before being used on another part of the holding where livestock could get access
2. It is permissible for milking equipment to be shared between BVD virus positive animals and BVD virus negative animals under the following conditions:
 - BVD virus positive animals are milked at a separate time to BVD virus negative animals, preferably last, and at no point are allowed to have contact with BVD virus negative animals
 - following milking of BVD virus positive animals, a thorough cleansing and disinfection, using Defra approved disinfectants at the appropriate concentration, will be carried out on:
 - the milking parlour
 - parts of milking equipment that were in direct contact with the BVD virus positive animal(s) and that are not hot washed (the outside of the clusters, pipework etc.)
 - any surfaces (e.g. walkways, gates, etc.) out with the BVD virus positive isolation facility visibly soiled or contaminated with secretions or excretions from the BVD virus positive animals

Feed and Bedding

1. Feed and/or bedding can be brought into a BVD virus positive isolation facility.
 - If machinery is being shared with another part of the holding it must be thoroughly cleansed and disinfected using Defra approved disinfectants at the appropriate concentration when leaving the BVD virus positive isolation facility
 - Alternatively, machinery can remain in the BVD virus positive isolation facility without having to be cleansed and disinfected between uses
2. Under no circumstances should feed be taken from a BVD virus positive isolation facility that is in use and fed to livestock or stored on another part of the holding.
3. Under no circumstances should bedding, manure or effluent be taken from a BVD virus positive isolation facility that is in use and be used, stored or disposed of on another part of the holding.
4. Any leftover feed, bedding, manure or effluent coming out of the BVD virus positive isolation facility must be disposed as a Category 2 Animal By-Product.
5. **Note:** none of the exemptions usually applied to animal by-products disposed of on farm of origin are applicable to animal by-products arising from a BVD virus positive isolation facility

Animal Welfare

1. In order to safeguard the welfare needs of social animals like bovines, the option of housing BVD virus positive animals with other animals is available. Refer to Biosecurity section above for further guidance on how this option can be implemented.
2. As mentioned in Structure above, the infrastructure must be suitable for housing bovine animals, in particular, the facility must have sufficient space to allow for the growth of cattle to be taken into account. It is the responsibility of the owner/operator of the holding to ensure that the welfare of the cattle is not compromised by overcrowding and the owner/operator must produce a contingency plan to exclude potential adverse welfare conditions which may result from or be exacerbated by potentially extended periods of time animals will spend in BVD virus positive isolation facilities. Such a plan will be recorded and agreed with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA).
3. Animals in a BVD virus positive isolation facility should be checked regularly for any signs of disease or illness.
4. Animals may be licensed out of a BVD virus positive isolation facility for veterinary care. Refer to Permitted Movements Conditions section below for further guidance.
5. The death of an animal in a BVD virus positive isolation facility must be recorded in the holding register. The holding register must be made available during inspections. The death of any cattle must also be reported to the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) within seven days of the death taking place.

Permitted Movements Conditions

1. If a vehicle is used to transport BVD virus positive animals, it must be thoroughly cleansed and disinfected immediately afterwards, preferably using Defra approved disinfectants at the appropriate concentration, before being used again.
2. If the movement of a live BVD virus positive animal is direct for slaughter, it is permissible for the vehicle entering the BVD virus positive isolation facility to make multiple pick-ups including multiple BVD virus positive animals in multiple holdings as long as:
 - **all** animals in the vehicle are destined to go direct to slaughter
 - BVD virus positive animals are not off-loaded at a livestock premises during the journey
3. Once the vehicle is emptied of BVD virus positive animals in the abattoir, it must be thoroughly cleansed and disinfected, preferably using approved Defra approved disinfectants at the appropriate concentration, before being used again.
4. BVD virus positive animals may move off the BVD virus positive isolation facility temporarily for milking purposes.
 - This movement is permissible only if milking facilities are located within the same holding
 - The movement must be direct
 - The BVD virus positive animal must return promptly to the BVD virus positive isolation facility once milking is complete.

APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Food Standards Agency to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.