**Application for CHECS TB Entry Level Membership**

Bovine TB breakdowns can be devastating – but often seem an inevitable fact of life. Government oversight of TB testing sometimes adds to feelings of powerlessness. However, there are things you can do to manage the ‘uncontrollable’.

CHECS TB Entry Level Membership aims to get farmer and veterinary surgeon discussing TB risk factors on-farm, and agreeing the most achievable ‘no regrets’ biosecurity measures to reduce risk of future breakdowns.

In this form, a number of simple options are listed under each of six Risk Factors. Only one under each needs to be selected for implementation to achieve Membership – although the more that can be committed to, the greater the opportunity to minimise the risk of a breakdown.

*Please discuss, agree the actions, sign the declarations then return the complete form to:*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Health scheme email/postal address | healthschemes@sruc.ac.uk |
|  | SRUC Health Schemes, Greycrook, St Boswells, TD6 0EQ |

**REMEMBER, THE DECLARING VETERINARY SURGEON MUST BE A BCVA-ACCREDITED TB VETERINARY ADVISOR (BATVA) – SEE** [www.bcva.org.uk/cpd](http://www.bcva.org.uk/cpd)

*For office use only*

|  |  |
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| CHECS Membership number (if appropriate) |  |

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| Farm Address (inc postcode) |  |
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**Risk Factors**

Farmers and cattle keepers are asked to discuss the six risk factors below with their British Cattle Veterinary Association (BCVA) TB-Accredited Veterinary Advisor (BATVA – see [www.bcva.org.uk](http://www.bcva.org.uk)) and choose the most appropriate option/s in each category for their farm. **Please indicate your choice with at least one tick for each Risk Factor**. Free text boxes are supplied for additional information only.

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| **Risk Factor 1: Minimise TB risk from purchased cattle** | ***Tick*** |
| Purchased animals constitute a risk of introducing TB infection into the herd. The tuberculin skin test has a moderate sensitivity with approximately one in five infected animals missed at standard interpretation. However, the longer a herd has been free of TB, the more you can trust its most recent test is truly clear. By understanding the TB risk from purchased stock, more informed purchasing and management decisions can be made. Options to meet this requirement are one of the following: | |
| 1. *I never buy cattle in* |  |
| 1. *If purchasing cattle, I only buy from herds less risky than my own (herds which have been TB-free for as many years as mine, or more)* |  |
| 1. *Before I purchase cattle, I look up the seller’s herd’s TB history on ibTB (*[*www.ibTB.co.uk*](http://www.ibTB.co.uk)*) to inform my purchasing decisions* |  |
| 1. *After purchase I look up the seller’s herd’s TB history on ibTB and alter my management of the purchased cattle depending on the TB risk* |  |
| 1. *I operate an Approved Finishing Unit (AFU) or Licensed Finishing Unit (LFU)* |  |
| *Please use this box if you wish to note any additional information relating to your chosen option.* | |

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| **Risk Factor 2: Minimise TB risk from contact with cattle in other herds** | ***Tick*** |
| TB can be spread between cattle in close contact directly and via aerosols. Ensuring cattle have no nose-to-nose contact over gates, fences or hedges will reduce, if not eliminate, the risk of TB spread from neighbouring cattle. Options to meet this requirement are one of the following: | |
| 1. *I have no contiguous grazing with other cattle holdings* |  |
| 1. *I never graze cattle on contiguous grazing at the same time as my neighbour’s cattle* |  |
| 1. *There is a three-metre, double-fenced gap between my cattle and my neighbour’s cattle* |  |
| 1. *There is no opportunity for nose-to-nose contact between my cattle and my neighbours’ cattle due to a large hedge or wall* |  |
| 1. *Temporary use of electric fencing alongside my boundary prevents nose-to-nose contact between my cattle and my neighbour’s cattle* |  |
| 1. *If I use common grazing, I comply with the TB protocol* |  |
| 1. *I operate an Approved Finishing Unit (AFU) or Licenced Finishing Unit (LFU)* |  |
| *Please use this box if you wish to note any additional information relating to your chosen option.* | |

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| **Risk Factor 3: Minimise TB risk from your own animals** | ***Tick*** |
| An animal that gives a negative skin test result when re-tested following an inconclusive result is known as a resolved inconclusive reactor (IR). Resolved IRs are at increased risk of having undisclosed *M. bovis* infection and in England must be restricted to the holding for life. Resolved IRs should be removed from the herd to slaughter as soon as possible and practical (the test that leads to restoration of the herd’s officially TB free status). Options to meet this requirement are one of the following: | |
| 1. *I cull them as soon as possible after the clearing test (within the next month)* |  |
| 1. *I do not put them back in calf and cull them at the end of their lactation* |  |
| 1. *I do not put them back in calf and cull them when their current calf is weaned* |  |
| 1. *I finish them inside on farm for slaughter* |  |
| 1. *I sell them to an Approved Finishing Unit (AFU)* |  |
| *Please use this box if you wish to note any additional information relating to your chosen option.* | |

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| **Risk Factor 4: Minimise the spread of TB through muck or slurry** | ***Tick*** |
| *M. bovis* can live for up to three weeks in well-composted farmyard manure (muck) and around six months in slurry. Ad hoc sharing of equipment, perhaps due to machinery breakdowns, can save time and money in the short term but could be a risk for introducing TB on to your farm. Contractors can also be a risk due to the difficulty of adequately cleaning and disinfecting their machinery. Options to meet this requirement are one of the following: | |
| 1. *I do not share my equipment or I have my own muck or slurry spreading equipment* |  |
| 1. *When using hired equipment or contractors, I ensure equipment is always visibly clean on arrival* |  |
| 1. *I ensure muck and slurry are spread onto arable land or mowing grass, or, if they are spread onto grazing grass, that grass will not be grazed by cattle for at least 60 days* |  |
| 1. *If importing cattle muck or slurry from other cattle holdings, I ensure it is not spread on to cattle grazing land* |  |
| *Please use this box if you wish to note any additional information relating to your chosen option.* | |

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| **Risk Factor 5: Reduce TB risk to and from badgers** | ***Tick*** |
| Badgers are known to be an important vector in TB transmission between cattle holdings. TB-infected badgers can excrete *M. bovis* in saliva, urine, faeces and pus from wounds. The most common way for infected badgers to transmit TB to cattle is via contaminated feed and water and this can be a relatively easy risk pathway to address. Biosecurity measures that reduce direct and indirect contact between cattle and badgers also protect the badger population from TB. Keeping badger populations TB-free where they are not endemically infected is vital. With assistance from your BATVA, you should be able to recognise active and inactive badger setts, latrines and runs. Being aware of the badger activity on your farm can help prioritise areas to protect. Options to meet this requirement are detailed below. You must first choose A, B or C. If you select A or B, you must then select **at least one** option from i), ii), iii) or iv): | |
| 1. *I have produced a simple map of badger activity on my farm for use throughout the year, to record seasonal sett use, runs and latrines. Where badger activity is identified I am reducing risk from contamination of water troughs and feed by (you must select at least one):* |  |
| *i) Badger proofing vulnerable water troughs* |  |
| *ii) Feeding from badger-proof troughs* |  |
| *iii) Badger-proofing licks* |  |
| *iv) Protecting stored feeds from badgers* |  |
| 1. *I am using wildlife cameras in yards to identify areas of badger activity. Where badger activity is identified I am reducing risk from contamination of water troughs and feed by (you must select at least one):* |  |
| *i) Badger-proofing vulnerable water troughs* |  |
| *ii) Feeding from badger-proof troughs* |  |
| *iii) Badger-proofing licks* |  |
| *iv) Protecting stored feeds from badgers* |  |
| 1. *I operate an Approved Finishing Unit (AFU) or Licensed Finishing Unit (LFU)* |  |
| *Please use this box if you wish to note any additional information relating to your chosen option.* | |

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| **Risk Factor 6: Have a TB test failure contingency plan** | ***Tick*** |
| A TB breakdown can have unforeseen consequences for animal health and welfare, farmer mental health and farm finances. Identifying which areas of the business would be affected by a breakdown and discussing options available to you with your BATVA can reduce the disruption a breakdown can cause. Options to meet this requirement are one of the following: | |
| *A. I finish all stock on farm or I can finish all stock on farm* |  |
| *B. I have a plan for youngstock leaving the farm* |  |
| *C. I have a plan to be able to replace stock* |  |
| *D. I operate an Approved Finishing Unit (AFU) or Licensed Finishing Unit (LFU)* |  |
| *Please use this box if you wish to note any additional information relating to your chosen option.* | |

**Farm Details – please complete in block capitals**

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| Farm Contact (name) | | |  | | | | | | |
| Business Name | | |  | | | | | | |
| CPH Number |  | / | |  | | / |  | Herd number |  |
| Farm Address (inc postcode) | | | | |  | | | | |
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|  | | | | |  | | | | |
| Farm Telephone Number | | | | |  | | | | |
| Farm Email Address | | | | |  | | | | |

**Declarations – please complete in block capitals**

**Owner/Manager:** By signing below, I (herd owner/manager) confirm my adherence to the indicated measures during the next 12 months. I also confirm that I understand failure to meet the requirements of CHECS TB Entry Level Membership within one month of the renewal being due after 12 months (as notified by my health scheme) will mean the suspension of CHECS TB Entry Level Membership until the requirements are met. I also understand that if the herd is CHECS TB Herd Accredited, losing CHECS TB Entry Level Membership will, from August 2021, mean the suspension of CHECS TB Herd Accreditation as well.

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| Owner/Manager (name) | |  | | |
| Date |  | | Signed |  |

**Veterinary Surgeon:** By signing below, I confirm that the CHECS TB Entry Level Risk Factors indicated on this form have been addressed for this herd.

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| Veterinary Surgeon | |  | | | | |
| Veterinary Practice | |  | | | | |
| Contact Email Address | | | |  | | |
| Contact Telephone Number | | | |  | | |
| Date |  | | | | Signed |  |
| BATVA Training Number | | |  | | | |