

BLUETONGUE

Bluetongue Information 2017

Introduction

Bluetongue is a viral disease of most domestic and wild ruminants such as cattle, sheep, goats, deer etc. Bluetongue virus (BTV) does not infect humans.

Transmission and Infection

The virus is transmitted by insect vectors (biting midges) that spread infection between animals and are most active between April and November in Ireland, and are commonly found around farms. As the presence of the disease depends on the presence of the vectors, the disease is seasonal – mainly appearing between July and November.

The three principal routes by which BTV might be introduced into Ireland include: importing and animal that is carrying the virus in its blood, the introduction of infected midges into Ireland, and through the importation of infected semen or other biological products.

Clinical Signs

In many herds or flocks, only one or two animals may be affected. Currently in Europe many infected animals are remaining asymptomatic, with diagnosis occurring solely through BTV surveillance testing. The following is a list that summarises the clinical signs that might be seen in an acutely affected animals:

- Sores and crusts on the face, mouth and teats
- Red eyes and excess tears
- Swollen face
- Drooling and frothing
- Lameness
- Weight loss
- Abortion
- Drop in milk yield
- Off feed

What should you do if you suspect disease?

Bluetongue is a notifiable disease. If you suspect any animals may be affected you must contact your regular veterinarian or notify the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine immediately by contacting your local Regional Veterinary Office or by calling **1850 200 456**.



BTV infected cow with conjunctivitis and nasal discharge.



BTV infected cow with erosion of nasal mucosa.



BTV infected cow with a swollen udder and crusting of the teats.



BTV infected sheep with profuse nasal discharge and swollen face.



BTV infected sheep with profuse nasal discharge and swollen face.



BTV infected sheep with coronitis.

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Further information on bluetongue can be found at:

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/bluetongue/>