Update on Bluetongue (March 2019)  BTV 02/2019

Bluetongue 8 confirmed in Belgium
- Belgium reported an outbreak of Bluetongue serotype 8 on 27/03/2019.
- This is the first outbreak of Bluetongue in Belgium since December 2008.
- The outbreak was confirmed on the 19/02/2019.
- The outbreak occurred in the south of the country in the Luxenbourg region (see map 1).
- A total of 8 bovine animals were affected in a susceptible population of 785.
- BTV control measures and restrictions will now apply to the whole of Belgium.

Bluetongue in the rest of Europe
- As per our last update in January 2018, the BTV 8 situation in Germany is ongoing and the German authorities have reported a total of 50 outbreaks there since the 1 January 2019.
- Italy, Greece and Spain have also reported outbreaks of Bluetongue since 1 January 2019.
- France has reported no outbreaks yet this year but a total of 666 outbreaks were reported during 2018 and the whole of France remains restricted for BTV 8 & 4.

Map 1 showing location of BTV 8 outbreak in Belgium
(Courtesy of ADNS system)
• Map 2 below shows distribution of BT restricted regions in Europe.


Measures to prevent bluetongue coming to Ireland via imported animals:

• DAFM implements a risk based post import testing protocol whereby all ruminant animals originating from or transiting through BTV affected counties are sampled for BTV on their arrival in Ireland.
• From now on all ruminant animals originating from Belgium will be tested for Bluetongue as part of this post import testing protocol.
What herd owners can do:

- Do not import ruminant animals from bluetongue restricted areas unless absolutely necessary.
- Contact your Regional Veterinary Office for advice if you are considering importing animals.

http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/contact/

- Seek additional assurances to ensure that animals are not infected with BTV prior to departure, such as a recent negative PCR test for bluetongue carried out in an accredited laboratory.
- On arrival, keep any imported animals isolated and indoors until they have been tested for BTV by staff from this Department and have returned a negative test result.
- Please read and follow these biosecurity guidelines before making any decision to import:

https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/animalhealthwelfare/diseasecontrols/bluetongue_disease/BiosecurityAdviceFarmersImpLivestockVer1260318.pdf

Key points in relation to Bluetongue

- The high-risk period for Bluetongue in Ireland is during the vector (midge) season which is between April and early December each year.
- Infected animals may not show any clinical signs and may only be detected through testing their blood for BTV.
- Even animals with bluetongue vaccination records may harbour BTV.
- If bluetongue is introduced to Ireland, it would have a major impact on our export markets. Also, the control measures required by the EU legislation would have a significant impact on local herd management.

Further information on Bluetongue:
DAFM website

https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/bluetongue/

Bluetongue information leaflet for photographs of clinical signs:


European Commission:

https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/control-measures/bluetongue_en
EU Regulation 1266 of 2007 on the control of Bluetongue:


Contact details for RVOs available at:

http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/contact/

NDCC
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