

Your reference:
Our reference: VITT/EXP/USA

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RECEIVED HARD
COPY 10/18/02

(by email and hard copy)
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11 October 2002

Dear Steve

CLASSICAL SWINE FEVER (CSF) IN THE UK

Thank you for your email of 18 September 2002. I enclose an additional copy of the "In Practice" article concerning PMWS and PDNS.

You asked for more detail on some options which had been identified to address problems which had been recognised during the outbreak. As previously noted, thinking on biosecurity and contingency planning was overtaken by the foot and mouth disease (FMD) outbreak and is now part of a comprehensive animal health and welfare strategy.

1. Institution of better control to prevent contact between the general public and animals

An intensive biosecurity campaign was mounted during the foot and mouth outbreak and was paramount in the eradication of the disease. Following on from that and with all notifiable diseases in mind, we worked closely with stakeholders to produce a short code to promote important biosecurity messages to farmers. This document, jointly owned by Defra and the key livestock organisations in England and Wales, was sent to all livestock farmers in September. I enclose a copy from our website. The code includes advice to limit and control farm visitors – people and vehicles.

On farms, people tending stock in isolation units must wear dedicated protective clothing, and use hand washing facilities and disinfectant footbaths on entry to and exit from the unit.

Contact between the general public and animals at markets and shows is covered by the Defra licence which market operators and show organisers must obtain before they can open for business. Licence conditions are designed to make sure that the risk of spreading disease is kept as low as possible.



At markets the operator must ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent non-authorized people from handling animals. At shows the organiser must provide hand wipes or hand washing facilities for the public who pet animals. The licences also include requirements to make sure that disease is not spread indirectly through footwear, clothing or livestock vehicles.

2. **Disallowing owners to work as lorry drivers**

Other than advice to farmers to limit and control farm visitors including people and their vehicles, this option has not been pursued.

3. **Disallowing casualty units to be located in the vicinity of healthy animals**

Farmers have been advised to isolate incoming and returning stock until their health status is assured, both in the biosecurity code and the guidance issued on restocking farms (see the Defra website at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/control/publications.htm>). Isolation buildings should be as near as possible to the farm entrance and separated from other farm buildings by 3 metres.

Certain categories of animals can be exempted from the 20 day whole farm standstill on animal movements, if they remain in strict isolation for 20 days. The isolation facilities must be 5 metres to 50 metres away from any other livestock depending on the type of animal (eg show animals, calves, breeding animals) and whether they are in door or out door facilities.

4. **Recognising the need to update a contingency plan for classical swine fever**

There is now increased emphasis within Defra on emergency preparedness for an outbreak of exotic animal disease. A Programme Board with membership from relevant parts of Defra, from local government and the Environment Agency has been set up to direct and co-ordinate this work. The Board will ensure that a modular contingency plan is prepared to cover the structural and operational aspects of controlling exotic diseases. This builds on the plans that guided the operation last year and will focus initially on FMD, reflecting agreed disease control policy, and include modules on the central and local structures and on procurement, finance, and augmentation of veterinary and other personnel resources. Further modules for other diseases, including CSF, will be integrated within the framework set by the EU.

The Board will ensure that the plans are developed with the active engagement of interested parties and are reviewed regularly. The first round of exercises to train staff and test these plans against agreed objectives will take place in local offices and headquarters before the end of this year.

5. **Formation of an emergency team to deal with future outbreaks of CSF and other diseases**

An integral part of our contingency planning is the functional identification of a comprehensive series of teams required to carry out all essential tasks in the control of an outbreak of exotic disease. Individuals and reserves have been identified to fill the necessary posts at short notice. Simulation exercises help to maintain a wide pool of suitable people to fill the necessary posts at all levels. Instructions are being written and tested to ensure that each team member is able to perform effectively whenever required.

I trust the above information will enable USDA/APHIS to give a positive response to any enquiries. As you note, there is a wide range of information on the Defra website.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Hall', written in a cursive style.

Simon Hall
Deputy Head, International Animal Health Division

Enc

cc: James Hughes, BE, Washington
(letter only by e-mail: James.Hughes@fco.gov.uk)

Better Biosecurity Provides

Peace of Mind, Healthy Stock and a More Viable Business

Benefits

- ▣ Protects your neighbours and the countryside.
- ▣ Keeps new disease out.
- ▣ Reduces the spread of disease.
- ▣ Keeps more animals healthy.
- ▣ Cuts costs of disease prevention and treatment.
- ▣ Improves farm efficiency.

How disease spreads

- ▣ Movement of animals, people and machinery between and within farms.
- ▣ Farm visitors – people and vehicles.
- ▣ Introduction of new animals.
- ▣ Contact with neighbours' livestock.
- ▣ Shared farm equipment.
- ▣ Contamination by vermin and wild birds.
- ▣ Animals drinking from contaminated rivers and streams.

How to stop it – KEEP IT CLEAN

- ▣ Be aware of the need for biosecurity.
- ▣ Make a herd/flock health plan with your vet including isolation for new or returning stock.
- ▣ Don't bring infection onto your farm, or spread it around your farm, on your clothes, footwear or hands.
- ▣ Where possible, limit and control farm visitors – people and vehicles.
- ▣ Keep farm access routes, parking areas, yards, feeding and storage areas clean and tidy.
- ▣ Have pressure washers, brushes, hoses, water and disinfectant available and make sure visitors use them.

- ▣ Don't allow contact with neighbours' livestock – maintain your fences.
- ▣ Don't share injecting and dosing equipment – if it can't be avoided, cleanse and disinfect thoroughly.
- ▣ Clean then disinfect any farm machinery/equipment if sharing with a neighbouring farm.
- ▣ Implement a pest control programme.
- ▣ Fence off streams and rivers – supply clean fresh drinking water in troughs.
- ▣ Keep livestock away from freshly spread slurry for six weeks.
- ▣ Ensure identification and record keeping are accurate and up to date.
- ▣ Dispose of fallen stock properly.

Buying new stock – Returning your stock to the farm

Always know the health status of animals you are buying or moving!

- ▣ Incoming and returning stock should be kept separate from the rest of the herd/flock – discuss with your vet and agree a testing programme.
- ▣ Use separate equipment and staff or handle isolated stock last.
- ▣ Keep isolation buildings as near as possible to the farm entrance and separate from other livestock buildings by 3 metres.
- ▣ If using a paddock, keep it separated by at least 3 metres (with double fencing) from other animals on the farm.
- ▣ Dispose of bedding so other livestock can't have access to it.

The British Cattle Veterinary Association
The British Deer Farmers Association
The British Goat Society
The British Pig Association
The British Veterinary Association
DEFRA
The Farmers' Union of Wales
The Meat and Livestock Commission
The National Beef Association
The National Farmers Union
The National Pig Association
The National Sheep Association
The Rare Breeds Survival Trust
The RSPCA
The Sheep Veterinary Society