

FAQs: TB testing programme update

From February 2021, OSPRI is managing TB eradication through an updated testing programme, placing a greater focus on higher risk areas while maintaining nationwide disease surveillance.



How is the programme changing?

The frequency of on-farm testing will change for some farmers based on different levels of risk. It means increasing testing where the risk is higher and testing less often where the risk is low, such as areas with no possum related risk.

How does it work?

TB surveillance is undertaken through on-farm testing, carcase inspection, and at meat processing plants. The TBfree programme tests animals according to the potential risk of infection. Risk factors include:

- Herd infection history
- Proximity to possum infection risk
- Sources of livestock movements into herds.

OSPRI uses this information to determine what animals should be tested, where and when. An important component is being able to track movement of animals with different risk levels.

This approach to testing makes more efficient use of the wider industry's investment of farmer levies in the TB programme.

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How are high risk movements tracked?

If you purchase an animal from C1 status herds (previously infected) after 9 February 2021, it may result in additional testing for your herd. These movements will be recorded in NAIT and will require a permit.

Why is this change to testing frequency necessary now?

OSPRI has piloted this approach to TB testing for deer herds since 2018. It is a natural progression as the TBfree programme reduces the number of infected herds, a broad testing programme is no longer the most efficient method of detecting TB infection. It makes more sense to focus resources in the area where the risk is higher. Improved animal traceability, through farmers engaging more with NAIT, means we can better track animals with a higher disease risk, and test less often in low risk areas.

When do the changes come in?

The changes in testing frequency will be rolled out in areas of lowest risk (herds currently testing once every 3 years located in the Vector Free Areas) from February 2021.

I have dairy/beef cattle. What does the change mean for me?

For farmers in low-risk surveillance areas, the changes will result in less frequent testing for herds. Your TB tester will contact you in advance of your next TB test. Additional on-farm testing may be required if animals entering your herd originated from a C1 status (previously infected) herd.

I'm a deer farmer, what does the change mean for me?

Deer herds in low-risk areas that currently test once every three years will no longer be routinely tested on-farm. Surveillance will continue through meat processing plants inspection.

How do I know if I am in a low-risk surveillance area?

You can see the status of your area on [this map](#) or call the OSPRI contact centre. Please note that this map is due to be updated in February 2021.

Within each area, OSPRI's surveillance system will determine which herds TB test and when.

If there is less on-farm TB testing, isn't there a risk of TB reoccurring in my region?

The risk of TB reoccurring in your region is managed in a number of ways, including possum control in risk areas, tracking and testing stock moving from higher risk herds to lower risk herds, and identifying any infections early to limit the spread.

We are confident we will still be able to quickly identify and respond to any reoccurrence, through both ongoing on-farm testing and carcase inspection at meat processing plants.



Further information

Visit www.ospri.co.nz/aboutTBfree

Or call **0800 482 463**