CHANGES TO TB TESTING PROVIDERS
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR FARMERS | JANUARY 2019

WHAT HAS CHANGED?
From 1 March 2019 AsureQuality Limited (AQ) will be the sole supplier of TB testing services for cattle and deer nationwide. TB testing services are currently carried out by two companies, AQ and Veterinary Enterprises (VetEnt).

WHY HAS IT CHANGED?
In late July 2018, OSPRI’s Board agreed to undertake an open procurement process to secure combined Cattle and Deer TB testing services for a three plus three-year term commencing 1 March 2019. This decision secures the future of OPSRI’s TB testing activities and creates efficiencies for your investment in the TBfree programme.

WHO DOES THE CHANGE AFFECT?
The change will impact farmers in the following regions where VetEnt currently provides TB testing services:

- South Waikato – cattle only
- Gisborne/Wairoa – cattle only
- North Manawatu-Wanganui – cattle only
- Marlborough – deer only
- Tasman – deer only
- North Canterbury – cattle and deer
- South Canterbury – cattle and deer

RFID SCANNING REQUIREMENT
From 1 March all cattle will have their Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tag scanned at the time of TB testing, as already happens with deer. The purpose of this is to support OSPRI’s disease management and traceability data.

WHAT EXPERIENCE DOES AQ HAVE?
AQ has a long history in TB testing for both cattle and deer, with a trained and experienced workforce based regionally throughout New Zealand. Over many years AQ and its staff have built up a significant amount of knowledge, experience and trust through supplying on-farm services, including TB testing, which has created an added value resource; a reservoir of experienced, known, valued and trusted staff working within their local communities.

AQ has continued to improve its training and management support services to ensure it has a continual improvement process in place to train, upskill and advise staff of any changes to technical specifications and TB Tester Guidelines as issued by OSPRI as manager of the TBfree programme. AQ places a high emphasis on the importance of health and safety to ensure staff have the knowledge, tools and resources to assess work areas and identify areas of potential risk before starting their work on-site.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM ASUREQUALITY

- Before your TB test is due, an AQ Field Technician will contact you by telephone to agree a date and time for your routine cattle or deer testing.
- At the time of booking a discussion will be held to understand your specific testing requirements by;
  - confirming your farm and animal details against TBFree records on the test allocation document
- reviewing the number of animals to be tested
- confirming all animals are RFID ear-tagged and are compliant with legal requirements
- confirming the current state and type of animal handling facilities, shed and yards
- ensuring there is identification of any known hazards and agreeing with you to meet at a safe arrival point on your farm.

- During this call, an assessment will be made to determine the suitability of facilities (including yards, pens, races, crushes, animal flow) and other environmental and animal-behaviour considerations to determine whether a second technician or assistant will be required.
- For deer farmers, AQ won’t sedate your animals, so if this is required in order to have the deer testing carried out safely, you will need to arrange to have your deer sedated (this cost is covered by the programme).
- The technical process for TB testing has not changed, although there is a new requirement to scan all animals’ RFID ear tags on read or inject day of testing.
- At the end of the testing process you will receive a test receipt advice on the outcome of testing and the number of animals tested.
- Should a reactor be identified at testing, the Field Technician will discuss all options with you as they follow the approved process for animal identification and plans for any additional testing.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO TO MAKE THE TESTING PROCESS BETTER**

- Ensure all animals have appropriate RFID ear tags.
- Check state of repair of animal handling facilities, races, crushes, sheds and yards.
- On arrival at the agreed safe arrival point, provide your TB Tester with a brief Health and Safety induction to ensure they can perform their services safely.
- For deer farmers, ensure your TB tester is aware of any sedation requirements.

**WILL I BE CONTACTED PRIOR TO MY TESTING BEING DUE?**

Yes. AQ will contact you directly to arrange your next TB test.

**ARE ANY CHANGES BEING MADE TO THE TB TEST?**

No, there are no changes being made to the way the TB test is administered.

**CAN I ALLOCATE MY TEST TIMING?**

You will need to discuss the timing of your tests with AQ.

**I NORMALLY SEDATE SOME OF MY ANIMALS BEFORE TESTING, DO I STILL NEED TO DO THIS?**

You are required to ensure you provide a safe working environment for the technician completing the TB testing. You should contact AQ if you have any questions.

**I NORMALLY COMPLETE OTHER ACTIVITIES WITH MY TB TEST FOR EXAMPLE VELVETING, CAN I STILL DO THIS?**

Any additional services will need to be arranged with AQ.

**QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR TB TESTING OR NAIT RESPONSIBILITIES?**

Call the OSPRI’s Contact Centre on 0800 482 4636 or visit [www.ospri.co.nz](http://www.ospri.co.nz) for more information