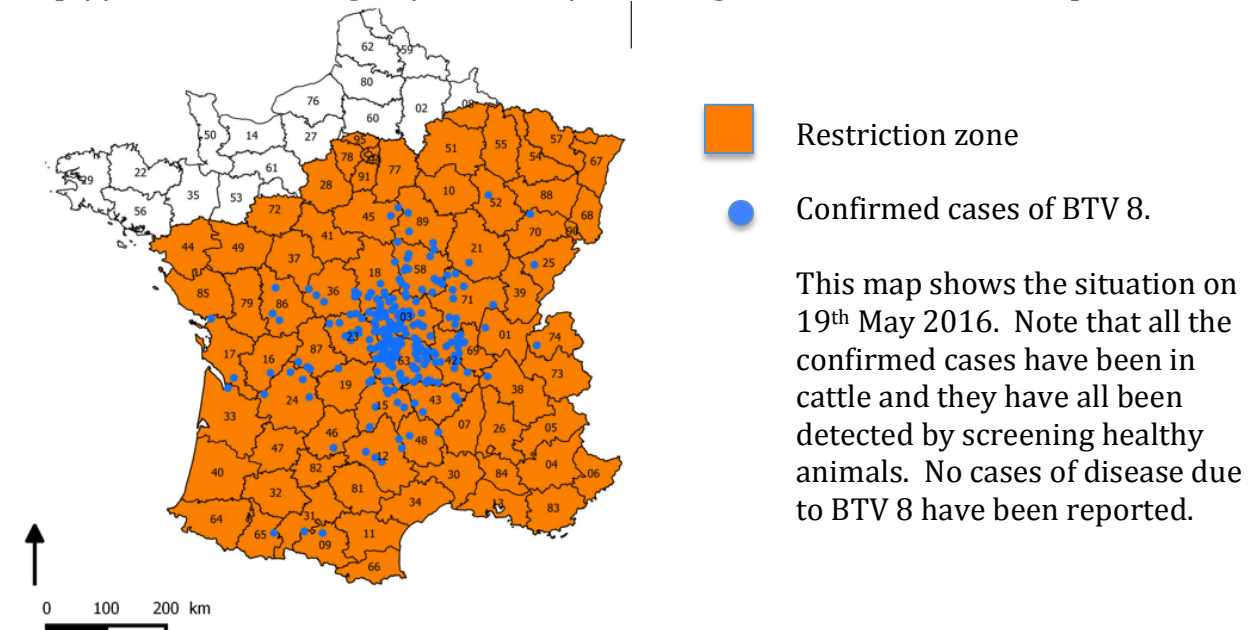




MARCHES VETS FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER – JULY 2016

Bluetongue (BTV) re-emerged in France in August 2015, and cases have continued to be reported in 2016. Disease appears to be caused by the same BTV 8 strain that was circulating in northern Europe in 2006 – 2008 and reached the UK in 2007. For information on the clinical signs of disease, see <http://www.nadis.org.uk/bulletins/bluetongue-in-cattle-and-sheep>



We have been advised that **vaccine against BTV 8 should be available in the UK by the middle of July**. Two vaccines, Bluevac BTV 8 and Zulvac BTV 8, will be available. Both vaccines will require **2 doses given 3 weeks apart** for both sheep and cattle. Bluevac BTV 8 is licensed for both sheep and cattle, with sheep requiring a 2ml dose and cattle a 4ml dose. With Zulvac there are 2 separate preparations for sheep and cattle, Zulvac 8 Ovis and Zulvac 8 Bovis. The dose of the Zulvac vaccines is 2ml for both species. **Full immunity is not achieved until approximately 3 weeks after the 2nd dose of vaccine** – with Bluevac it's 20 days and with Zulvac it's 25 days after the second dose. So, this means that it will take 6 weeks from the first dose for animals to be fully protected. **Both vaccines are safe to use during pregnancy**. The cost will be in the region of £1.50 to £3 for the 2 dose course, depending on whether you're vaccinating sheep or cattle, on which vaccine you use and the pack size.

So, should you vaccinate against Bluetongue? Vaccination is the only practical way to protect against the disease. Using pour-ons or dipping to reduce the chance of animals being bitten by midges was shown not to be effective during the last outbreak. So, the question remains as to how likely it is that BTV will arrive in the UK. APHA have predicted an 80% chance of BTV 8 arriving in the UK by the end of September, but the risk would increase if the

virus reaches the northern-most areas of France. Clearly, the disease is likely to occur first in the UK in areas near the coast, so our area of the country is not at the greatest risk of disease. However, with the high level of stock movements that take place in the UK, it would be easy for the disease to quickly spread across the country. Have a chat to us if you are undecided about whether or not to vaccinate.

The **BVD Free England Scheme** was launched on 1st July 2016. Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland all have compulsory, government led eradication schemes in place. The England scheme is, at least initially, a voluntary industry-led initiative. The aim is that all breeding cattle herds in England will test and monitor for BVD and where BVD PI's (animals persistently infected with BVD) are identified these are only sent for slaughter and not sold on to other herds. The BVD Free England Scheme will develop a **national database**, storing individual and herd results for scheme members. **Information on the database will be available to everyone**, so a cattle finisher who isn't a member of the scheme because they do not breed cattle will be able to access BVD information either on the herd of origin of the cattle they purchase or on the individual animal.

We would **encourage all cattle breeders to register** on www.bvdfree.org.uk and then to discuss with us what needs to be done to satisfy the requirements of the scheme – this will involve testing and biosecurity measures. Although BVD vaccination is an important part of BVD control, it isn't enough on its own to control the disease, so herds that have been vaccinating but not testing will require the same initial testing as herds that don't vaccinate.

Group 4 and 5 wormers for sheep – use them or lose them!

This really is the message. These products, **Zolvix** and **Startect** continue to be classified as POM-V, meaning that they can only be prescribed by vets. Sales, particularly of Startect, have been low and there is a real concern that Startect may disappear from the market place if this continues. One litre packs of Startect are already being withdrawn, although some are still available at present. We would **encourage everyone to use a group 4 or 5 wormer when you buy in sheep**, in order to reduce the chance of buying in resistant worms.

The **other optimum time to use these products is July/August time in lambs**. At this time of year the worm challenge on pasture will be high, so there is maximum benefit in using a highly effective wormer at this time.

We know that some people think that it's best to save these new wormers until the other wormers don't work. But modelling studies have shown that by integrating the new products earlier, the efficacy of all wormer groups is maintained for longer. The additional danger of not using the new products is that the manufacturers will decide that it is simply not worth producing them.