



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT

Title: Tuberculosis (Wales) Order 2010
Date: 04 May 2010
By: Elin Jones, Minister for Rural Affairs

Over the past three years, we have developed a comprehensive programme to eradicate TB across Wales. Although the external focus is on the pilot area, the programme includes addressing the disease in cattle across Wales by identifying and getting rid of the disease at an earlier stage, through increased testing and Pre - Movement Testing, improving on farm practices and reviewing our policies and legislation so that they support our aim of eradicating bovine TB.

Today I am laying the Tuberculosis (Wales) Order 2010 which further strengthens bovine TB policy in Wales. This includes changes to Pre-Movement Testing and linking the value of the animal slaughtered as a result of bovine TB to good practice and compliance with the testing system.

Amending policy on Pre-Movement Testing through the current system is a lengthy process. This Order allows for the majority of Pre-Movement Testing exemptions to be managed through an administrative rather than legislative process. This will allow us to respond more quickly to a changing disease picture. I have already agreed that the exemption for cattle moving off

premises within 1 month of arrival; and animals moving to housed shows or ones that last more than 24 hours will be revoked with the Order coming into force.

The Order also links value to best practice. We are legally obliged to pay compensation for cattle slaughtered due to bovine TB with cattle keepers receiving the market value of their animals. We do not compensate for consequential losses such as loss of income or increased costs due to bovine TB restrictions.

The method of valuing the animal slaughtered paid from 25 May will be revised so that it reflects any poor practice and non-compliance on the part of the cattle keeper. This includes overdue tests, engagement in illegal activities and ignoring a Veterinary Improvement Notice issued by Animal Health. We do not expect Veterinary Improvement Notices to be issued often, but if needed they could be used where continuing bad practice or lack of action by a cattle keeper could be having an impact on the level or duration of the infection on a holding. These measures are not about saving money but ensuring that keepers recognise their responsibilities and that compensation payments reflect this. An appeal process will be introduced to ensure that reductions are appropriate. Officials will now work with the farming industry and veterinary profession to introduce these measures in a clear and effective manner.

The Order also clarifies terminology and allows the Welsh Assembly Government to slaughter cattle if the cattle keeper is unable to, for reasons of practicality, present them for testing.

The Order is intended to come into force on the 25 May 2010.

I would also like to update members of other recent developments in relation to the programme such as the introduction of additional cattle controls within the Intensive Action Pilot Area from 1 May. This means that herds within the pilot area will be tested every 6 months, there will be greater control over

movement of cattle into and out of the pilot area and all herds will require two clear tests before restrictions are lifted.

To make sure that we protect the taxpayer's money, we have also been working with valuers in Wales to ensure that value of the slaughtered animals is fair. While the numbers of slaughtered cattle in Wales did not fall significantly last year, we expect to see a substantial reduction in the level of compensation paid because of our work in this area. I will be able to update members on the final cost of compensation for 2009/10 and other progress later this year as part of my annual report to the Rural Development Sub-Committee.

The Tuberculosis (Wales) Order 2010 is attached. For more information on the Bovine TB Eradication Programme for Wales, visit www.wales.gov.uk/bovinetb.