

Bluetongue virus serotype 3 (BTV-3)



Bluetongue virus (BTV) is a notifiable disease. If you suspect signs of any notifiable diseases, including bluetongue, you MUST immediately notify your Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) Scotland field services local office. Failure to do so is an offence

Which species are affected?

Bluetongue virus (BTV) is a notifiable disease affecting ruminants such as sheep, cattle, goats, deer, and camelids, such as alpacas and llamas

How is BTV-3 spread?

Midge bites are the most common way for the virus to spread to livestock, but BTV can also spread through the import or movement of infected animals, their germplasm (semen and ova), embryos and fetuses.

BTV does not affect people or food safety. Meat and milk from infected animals is safe to eat and drink. However, BTV can cause significant damage to livestock populations and is considered a risk to the agricultural sector. Remain vigilant for clinical signs of BTV: www.gov.scot/bluetongue

Cases of BTV-3 in England

The most likely cause of the current 2023/24 cases in England, is midges infected with BTV-3 blown across from continental Europe. There is no evidence that virus is currently circulating in the UK midge population. For more information on the situation in England, visit www.gov.uk/bluetongue

Due to BTV-3 cases in England, Great Britain has lost its disease-free status. Therefore, trade in live ruminant animals with the EU and movements to Northern Ireland (NI) are currently suspended.

The duration of this suspension is dependent on a vaccine becoming available, regionalisation being pursued and approved, or regaining disease freedom, which can take two years.

The Ruminant Health & Welfare website is updated regularly with BTV-3 information and resources:

www.ruminanthw.org.uk/bluetongue-virus

Bluetongue hotline: 024 7771 0386 9am-5pm Mon - Fri

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What can you do?

- Remain vigilant and know the signs of bluetongue
- Exercise caution before buying livestock
- Source animals and germplasm responsibly
- Be aware of the disease risks

If exporting germplasm out of GB, ensure you meet the Export Health Certificate (EHC) requirements and any additional safeguarding measures (such as testing donor animals before and after collection of semen before it is released for use).

Can I vaccinate my animals?

Trade in livestock from GB to the EU (including movements to NI) is dependent on a vaccine becoming available. There is no vaccine for BTV-3, which is the serotype detected in England. You can vaccinate against BTV-4 and BTV-8 serotypes, but this does not protect against BTV-3.

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**To find out more about bluetongue and the
latest situation visit:**

www.gov.scot/bluetongue



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